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SECRETARY SOUTHERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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Vol. VII.

Richmond, Va., February, 1879.

No. 2.

Reminiscences of the Campaign of 1864 in Virginia.

By General WILLIAM F. PERRY.

No. 1.

[We are anxious to get material for the history of the campaign of 1864, and are glad to be able to publish this sketch of the battle of the Wilderness, by General Perry, and to have the assurance that he will follow it up by other sketches of the same campaign.]

It was my fortune to command Law's brigade of Field's division, Longstreet's corps, during the greater part of the year 1864—first as its senior colonel, and afterwards as its permanent commander. The report which was made in August of the part taken by my command in the great military operations of May and June, will doubtless never see the light. The copy which I retained was lost during the retreat to Appomattox. The brigade happened on several important occasions to be thrown at critical points where much depended upon its behavior; and under circumstances where no eyes but those of its immediate commander were upon it, it performed deeds that deserve, at least, to be rescued from oblivion. It is from a desire to render, even at this late day, a merited tribute to the

highest soldierly qualities uniformly displayed, and in the hope of contributing something not wholly void of interest to the archives of the Southern Historical Society, that these reminiscences have been penned. Writing from memory, after the lapse of fifteen years, I shall not be expected to give details with the accuracy of an official report, or even to recall the names of many of those whose gallantry entitled them to honorable mention.

The following was the composition of the brigade when the campaign began:

The Fourth Alabama regiment, commanded by Colonel P. D. Bowles (afterwards Brigadier-General).

The Fifteenth Alabama, under Colonel William C. Oates.

The Forty-fourth Alabama, under Lieutenant-Colonel John A. Jones.

The Forty-seventh Alabama, under Major J. M. Campbell.

The Forty-eighth Alabama, under Major J. W. Wigginton.

The brigade numbered not exceeding fifteen hundred men rank and file.

BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS.

When General Grant began his advance from Culpeper, two divisions of General Longstreet's corps, Kershaw's and Field's, were in the neighborhood of Gordonsville, having recently arrived from east Tennessee. The march began on the 4th of May, I believe, about 2 o'clock. After dark on the evening of the 5th the troops went into camp nearly ten miles, as the road ran, from the point on the Plank road at which General A. P. Hill's corps had been engaged that evening. About midnight the men were aroused by marching orders, and the corps moved off, Kershaw's division in front. It was probably 2 o'clock A. M. when my brigade left camp.

The progress made before light was slow. The night was dark, and we seemed to be on a narrow country road. As it grew light the speed of the men was quickened. At sunrise firing was heard in the distance, and about the same time the direction of our march changed almost at a right angle to the left. The distance to the scene of the engagement was now probably about five miles, and it was traversed with the greatest possible speed.

The first visible sign of battle that we encountered was the field hospital, through the depressing scenes of which our line of march lay. We were now on the Orange plank-road, and began to meet the wounded retiring from the field. At first there were few; but

soon they came in streams, some borne on litters, some supported by comrades, and others making their way alone. Close behind them were the broken masses of Heth's division, swarming through the woods, heedless of their officers, who were riding in every direction shouting to gain their attention.

The brigades, pressing on with increasing speed, lapped each other, and now in some places filled the road with a double column of march. The only encouraging feature of the situation was the manner in which the men bore up under the depressing influences around them. They were just now rejoining their old comrades and idolized commander, after a separation of eight months. They saw that this reunion had occurred at a crisis when lofty qualities were in demand and great things were to be done; and they rose with the emergency. The stronger the pressure upon them, the greater the rebound and the firmer their resolution seemed to become. They urged the retreating soldiers to reform—come back—and aid them in beating the enemy. In a tone that indicated the belief that such an announcement was of itself sufficient to inspire renewed hope and courage, they informed them that they were "Longstreet's boys," returned to fight with them under "Old Bob." Their stern resolution rose into enthusiasm when a retreating soldier shouted, "Courage, boys, Longstreet's men are driving them like sheep." Kershaw then had reached the field, and gone into action, and they knew well what to expect of him. He had arrived, like De Saix at Marengo, in one of those great crises, which few men are ever called upon to meet twice in a lifetime. Heth was far to the rear; the last battalion of Wilcox had broken just as the head of his column reached the point where stood General Lee, like a pillar of cloud, the only remaining obstacle to stay the surging billows that were steadily rolling onward and now near at hand. At a double quick step, under fire and almost in the face of the foe, that four thousand men form line in the dense woods and attack with such fury that more than thirty thousand veterans recoil before them.

But the column of Field was now pressing up, Anderson's Georgia brigade in front. It was deployed on the right of the road, where the enemy were in greatest numbers, and had made greatest progress. Next came Gregg's brigade of Texans, hardly five hundred strong. It was thrown into line in the presence of General Lee on the left of the road. I shall not attempt to describe the scene—rising to the moral sublime—between this brigade and Gen-

eral Lee, or the baptism of fire and of blood that awaited it. Of these history has already taken charge.

Benning's Georgia brigade next arrived, numbering not over one thousand men. It passed over the ground stained by the blood of the heroic Texans. Being a larger brigade, it produced more impression; but its advance exposed its right flank to a deadly fire from the troops south of the road. This checked its progress and inflicted upon it great loss. I soon had occasion to learn, too, that heavy masses were pressing by and beyond its left.

Next came the brigade with which this paper has more immediately to do. I was ordered to form to the left of the road also, in what seemed an old field, containing thirty acres or more. As the column wheeled into line, it passed immediately by a large group of horsemen, consisting chiefly of the corps and division commanders and their officers of the staff. But the central figure of that group—and the central figure of that larger group of famous men which the war between the States brought to the attention of mankind—was General Lee. The conception of his appearance in my mind to this day is that of a grand equestrian statue, of colossal proportions. His countenance, usually so placid and benign, was blazing with martial ardor. The lamb in his nature had given place to the lion, and his spirit seemed transfused through every one who looked upon him. It was impossible not to feel that every man that passed him was, for the time being, a hero. The formation was completed at a double quick step, and the instant that the last company sprung into line the forward movement began.

The open ground in front sloped gradually downward for two or three hundred yards, and then, by an abrupt declivity, it descended to a narrow swamp or morass, which, beginning near the Plank road, extended northward in a direction nearly parallel to my line. Beyond the morass the ground rose with a moderately steep ascent for several hundred yards, and was covered with trees and a scattering undergrowth.

At the command the men moved forward with alacrity, and with increasing speed, to the brow of the steep declivity referred to. Here the center and left regiments found themselves confronted by dense masses of the enemy, some of them across the morass and not fifty yards distant, some crossing it and others still beyond. My front rank fired a volley without halting, and the whole line bounded forward with their characteristic yell. The enemy were

evidently taken by surprise. The suddenness of our appearance on the crest, the volley, the yell and the impetuous advance caused them to forget their guns. They returned only a scattering fire and immediately gave way.

While descending the slope, and just before the occurrence mentioned, I became aware, from the direction of the balls which passed, that a force of the enemy had crossed the morass, ascended the heights and occupied a body of woods at the farther limit of the open ground, two hundred yards or more beyond my extreme left. I immediately sent an order to Colonel Oates, commanding the Fifteenth regiment, the largest and one of the best in the brigade, "to change direction in marching"—that is, to wheel his battalion to the left while advancing, so as to face the woods—and to attack furiously. No farther attention was given to the matter until the main line had encountered and routed the enemy, and was crossing the swamp. Feeling then that the utmost importance attached to the success of Colonel Oates' movement, and that the safety of the brigade might be compromised by an advance far to the front, while a force of the enemy—I knew not how large—was upon my flank and rear, I hastened, almost at full speed, to that part of the field, and came in sight just in time to witness the successful execution of one of the most brilliant movements I have ever seen on a battlefield. The order had been received amidst the indescribable clangor of battle. The attention of a line of men over two hundred yards long had been gained; they had been wheeled through an arc of at least sixty degrees, had traversed the intervening open ground, had entered the woods at a charge and were driving its occupants—more than twice their number—in the wildest confusion before them; and but little more than five minutes had elapsed since the giving of the order!

Colonel Oates says, in writing to me: "I learned from prisoners taken that the force I encountered was the Fifteenth New York regiment, that had been stationed at Washington City, and used as heavy siege artillerymen during the greater part of the war, and that they numbered between one thousand and twelve hundred men. I had in the engagement not over four hundred and fifty officers and men. I lost two men killed and eleven wounded. I never did understand how it was that I lost so few. I always attributed it to two things: first, that the troops of the enemy were not veterans—they were unused to battle; and, secondly, the rapidity and boldness of my movement, and the accuracy of the fire of my men."

Feeling now perfectly secure as to my flank, I sent word to Colonel Oates to rejoin the brigade, and hastened to the main line. I found that the Forty-fourth and Forty-eighth regiments had moved obliquely to the left, where the enemy appeared to be in largest numbers, thus producing a considerable gap between the former and the Forty-seventh on its right. These two regiments had crossed the morass, and were pressing steadily up the hill, firing as they advanced. The two right regiments were not in sight. They had obeyed orders in keeping closed upon the Plank road, and were there hotly engaged, as will be seen hereafter.

On returning to the line, I first struck the Forty-fourth Alabama, the second regiment in size in the brigade. Colonel Jones had been wounded, and the command had devolved upon its youthful Major, George W. Carey. The line was well closed up. The gallantry of Major Carey was very conspicuous, as was usual. His commanding form was in front of the centre of his line, his countenance ablaze, the flag in his left hand, and his long sword waving in his right. Moving to the left, I found the Forty-eighth giving evident signs of faltering. Many of the men were leaving the ranks and taking shelter behind the trees. The fire was severe, but the enemy, being a little back of the crest of the hill, sent most of their balls over our heads. At this critical moment the gallant Fifteenth appeared upon the left. Colonel Oates, finding no enemy in his immediate front, swung his regiment round to the right, and delivered a single volley up the line which confronted us, and the work was done. The enemy instantly disappeared, and the heights were carried. I was now solicitous in regard to the Fourth and Forty-seventh regiments, but my horse having been killed under me in rear of the Forty-fourth, I was unable to go to them in person. Captain Terrell, was, however, sent, and reported them in the condition hereafter described by Colonel Bowles. The enemy had been driven back on the right of the road, and the firing had ceased. The long gap in my line had taken care of itself admirably. As the undergrowth was dense, the enemy had probably failed to observe it.

I never had the means of ascertaining the strength of the force which we had encountered. The division of General Wadsworth was there, probably supported by other troops. General Wadsworth himself was killed on the Plank road by the Fourth Alabama. They covered a front of at least a half mile, and consisted of several lines. An officer of Heth's division, Colonel Jones, whom I met

by accident after the war, informed me that a number of his wounded were left on the field in the morning, and were borne back after the ground was recovered, and that they all concurred in the statement that six or seven lines of battle had advanced over them, and had been rolled back by a single line of Alabamians. It is possible that the peril of their situation acting upon their imagination magnified the number.

The conduct of the officers and men had been above all praise; but fortune had been very lavish in her favors to us. It was fortunate that the nature of the ground was such that we burst like a thunderclap upon the enemy and turned them into flight, before they had time to inflict any injury, or to see that there were no supporting lines behind us. It was fortunate that the success of Colonel Oates had been so complete in his movement on the extreme left of the enemy; and that the regiments had moved forward in diverging lines, thus extending our front so as to equal that of the opposing force. It was fortunate that, in ascending the hill beyond the swamp, the men had been screened, to a considerable degree, from the enemy's fire by the nature of the ground; and, finally, that the Fifteenth regiment had arrived on the left at the crisis of the engagement, and delivered its decisive blow.

I have been somewhat minute in my account of what the left regiments of my brigade did that morning, because no one else, who had a right to speak, witnessed it; or, so far as I am aware, has ever heard of it to this day. The only accounts I have seen of the battle on the left of the Plank road conveyed the impression that the attacks of Gregg and Benning left little or nothing for Law's brigade to do but to march up and occupy the ground which had been won. No one is to blame for this, for no one knew any better. Those two able men and brave officers were my comrades in arms and my personal friends. They are both sleeping in the tomb, one of them a martyr to the lost cause. I would be among the last on earth to "abate the tithe of a hair" from their merited honor. With their gallant comrades, they accomplished everything that was possible, and still, for the reason that their lines were too short, left untouched and unshaken the greater part of the dense masses that were pressing steadily forward, some of which, themselves unseen, would in a few minutes have been in point blank range of General Lee and "Traveler."

But I seem to have forgotten the noble old Fourth and its younger companion, the Forty-seventh. I did not see them during the en-

gagement, but, fortunately, have before me an account of the fiery ordeal through which they passed, written by Colonel Bowles, the gallant commander of the Fourth. I give it in his own language, making some unimportant abridgments.

After describing the formation of the line in the open field and in the presence of General Lee, he says: "Soon after entering the woods, my skirmish line encountered the enemy and opened fire. The main line soon came up, and I ordered a charge. The men advanced firing. After going about one hundred yards, we came upon the enemy's advanced line of works, made of logs. Here my men fired about ten rounds, when the enemy ceased firing and advanced upon me. We met them with a counter charge, Major Campbell following with the Forty-seventh. We advanced two hundred yards or more through a hailstorm of lead, and found ourselves on a second line of logs. The Plank road was in view all the time. We had been here but a short time when it became evident that the enemy south of the Plank road had passed our right flank, and a heavy fire from that direction was soon opened. About the same time Lieutenant-Colonel Scruggs came to me and reported that the Forty-seventh had given way, and that the enemy were pressing by my left flank also. I immediately ordered a retreat. The enemy saw it and advanced rapidly, delivering a severe fire. We reached the first line of works referred to above, and my men were quickly reformed, the Forty-seventh taking position on my left. The enemy had reformed also, and were evidently preparing to advance upon us. I resolved to anticipate them, and ordered the Fourth and Forty-seventh to charge. They obeyed with as much gallantry as soldiers ever displayed on the battlefield. The enemy gave way, and we again found ourselves on the advanced line of works. About this time a Federal officer came up the road within a few steps of my right, and was shot from his horse. It proved to be General Wadsworth, of the United States regulars. Soon afterwards the Twentieth Georgia regiment moved up and formed in rear of my right, parallel to the road. It was hardly in position before the enemy, just across the road and in full view, opened a deadly fire upon it and drove it away. By this time my ranks were terribly thinned. The position was evidently untenable, owing to the presence of the enemy upon the right. I therefore ordered a retreat, and fell back to the first line of works. Here I was soon afterwards joined by the Forty-seventh Alabama and the Twentieth Georgia regiments, which had reformed farther to the rear. Shortly after-

wards General Field approached and said: 'this is all of my command that I can find.' I was soon afterwards ordered to the left, passed General Perrin's brigade of Alabamians forming line on the crest, and rejoined you with the Fifteenth, Forty-fourth and the Forty-eighth. In this engagement and that which followed late in the evening, I lost considerably over half my men, among them Major W. M. Robbins wounded."

This graphic account of Colonel Bowles explains the severe loss of the Texas and Georgia brigades on the same ground, and the impossibility of holding an advanced position on the Plank road until the Federal troops on the south of it had been driven back.

On gaining the crest with my center and left regiments, I sent a staff officer to General Lee with instructions to say that I had driven back several lines of the enemy, and had carried the heights beyond the swamp; but that in the event of an attack, which I thought probable, we should be outflanked and enveloped. I was guilty of the irregularity of reporting directly to the Commander-in-Chief, because I did not know where General Field was to be found, and was communicating knowledge that I thought General Lee ought to have at once. Word was brought back that I should shortly be relieved. Judging from this reply that General Lee supposed that my command had exhausted its strength and needed to be withdrawn, and knowing well that he would have need of every soldier at the front who could fire a gun, I sent Captain L. R. Terrell, Assistant Adjutant-General, to say that the men had supplied themselves with ammunition from the boxes of the enemy, that they were still able to do good fighting, and that I only needed to have my flanks protected.

In momentary expectation of an attack, I continued to occupy my extended line, until a staff officer of General Perrin, of Anderson's division, reported to me for advice as to where his command should be established. It was placed in position next to the road, my line contracting and moving to the left, to give room. It was then that the Fourth and Forty-seventh were sent for to rejoin their comrades. General Perrin's brigade barely had time to complete its formation before the expected attack came. The firing was heavy for a short time, especially toward the right; but the enemy were soon repulsed, and made no farther effort at this point during the day. A Florida brigade, of Anderson's division, now arrived, and I received orders to drop to the rear of the two and act as a support. The three brigades mentioned constituted from this time forward the only troops on the left of the road.

General Lee's line was now thoroughly established, and the ground lost in the early morning had been completely recovered. The forces as they arrived on the field had been handled with consummate skill, and right nobly had they responded to the demands upon them. Language can hardly do justice to their conduct. They had arrived in the midst of confusion and apparent disaster. Their lines had been formed under fire, and in the very presence of the enemy moving forward in dense array and perfect order. Such had been the urgency of the crisis that single brigades, and sometimes regiments, as their formation was completed in succession, assailed the foe with almost resistless fury. And now, within less than two hours from the time that the head of their column had reached the field, two small divisions, numbering in all nine thousand men, had met and rolled back in confusion eight full divisions of the enemy, constituting one-half of General Grant's vast army!* I do not think a parallel can be found in the history of modern warfare.

It was now nearly nine o'clock in the morning. The great struggle was still to come. The Federal lines were some distance in front of the Brock road, the most direct route to Spotsylvania Courthouse and to Richmond. They had even taken the precaution to construct upon it a triple line of fortifications. Situated as the armies were, it was the obvious policy of each commander to double back the wing of the opposing force. The success of General Grant would have opened an unobstructed road to Richmond, and might have been decisive of the campaign. That of General Lee might have ended as did the battle of Chancellorsville a year before. It would at least have interposed his army between General Grant and his objective point. The arrival of Longstreet's corps and Anderson's division defeated the plan of Grant, and threw him on the defensive. The effort of General Lee was still to come. The plan of attack was made known by officers of the staff to the brigade commanders on the left. It was to throw a force upon the flank and rear of Hancock, and at the same time advance our right and assail his front, so as to roll up and press back his entire left wing towards Fredericksburg. Instructions were also given that the left brigades conform their movements to those of the troops on their right, holding back, however, so as to constitute a sort of movable pivot upon which the whole line might wheel. It is evident that the successful execution of such a movement

* His own corps of four divisions, two divisions of Burnside's corps, and two of Warren's.

would not only have disposed of Hancock for the day, but would have thrown a powerful force perpendicular to General Grant's centre and right wing, already confronted by General Ewell.

There is a lull all along the line. It is the ominous stillness that precedes the tornado. Three brigadas under Mahone—a dangerous man—are already in position for the flank attack, whose spectre seems to have been haunting Hancock from the beginning. No wonder, it was so near Chancellorsville. A yell and a volley announce the opening of the tragedy. The din of battle rolls eastward; the enemy are giving way. It is a moment pregnant with momentous results, and to those of us not engaged one of intense anxiety. The left brigades begin to move forward. Already they have made considerable progress; and still eastward roll the fiery billows of war. Can it be possible that we are on the eve of a great victory? But the fire begins to slacken; the advance movement ceases. What can be the cause? Has that single line of attack expended its strength? Oh, for a fresh division, to be hurled upon that shattered, reeling flank! But no; there are no reserves. Heth has not yet reorganized, and Wilcox has moved far to the left to open communication with Ewell. The firing ceases, and the victory, almost won, slips from our grasp.

When Hancock's left had been shattered and driven back, General Longstreet conceived the design of attacking the right flank, also, of the Federal forces south of the Plank road. Their entire line had been so disorganized as to render the success of such an attack almost a certainty. He was riding down the road in company with General Jenkins, at the head of his splendid brigade—the largest in Field's division, and one of the largest in the army—and had almost reached the point where the blow was to be struck. But the evil genius of the South is still hovering over those desolate woods. We almost seem to be struggling against destiny itself. Another needless mistake, like that which a year before, almost on the same ground, had cast "ominous conjecture" upon the success of our cause, now strikes him down upon whom, for the time, every thing depends. General Longstreet is dangerously wounded, and General Jenkins is killed. The command of the corps and that of the brigade devolve respectively upon General Anderson and Colonel Bratton, who, unacquainted doubtless with the situation, and ignorant of the plan to be executed, can of course do nothing.

It does not fall within the scope of this paper to give an account.

of the events on the south of the road farther than they were connected with the movements of my own command. The report of General Hancock, however, although the uglier features of his situation are doubtless toned down, proves how near we were to a great victory. He says that Frank's brigade was swept away; that Mott's division was thrown into confusion; that he endeavored to restore order, and reform his line of battle by throwing back his left, so as to rest it upon the Brook road; that he was unable to effect this, owing to the partial disorganization of the troops; and finally that it was thought advisable to withdraw the troops and reform in the breastworks. But for the misfortune to Longstreet, it is probable he would have had a lively time reforming. Mr. Swinton, as quoted by Mr. Leigh Robinson, writes: "It seemed indeed that irretrievable disaster was upon us; but in the very torrent and tempest of the attack, it suddenly ceased, and all was still." And again: "But in the very fury and tempest of the Confederate onset, the advance was of a sudden stayed by a cause at the moment unknown. This afterwards proved to have been the fall of the head of the attack."

The three brigades on the left now remained inactive for several hours. There were no troops in communication with General Perry's left. There was a gap—I know not how wide—between him and the troops of General Wilcox, sent in that direction after the arrival of Longstreet's corps. Though not charged with the care of this exposed flank, I felt solicitude enough in regard to it to send an officer with a squad of men to act as videttes. This occurred, I suppose, about twelve o'clock. Some time afterwards, information was received which strengthened my apprehensions, and caused me to send Colonel Oates in that direction with his own and the Forty-eighth Alabama regiment. After three o'clock, I received information which induced the belief that a formidable attack from that quarter was impending. I communicated to General Lee the information I had received, and began to move the remainder of my brigade in that direction. Unfortunately a staff officer, at this juncture, approached and informed me that a general advance would begin in a few moments, and instructed me to keep well closed upon the brigades in front. This was the attack upon the enemy's breastworks in the evening, in which our comrades in arms, Jenkins' brigade, bore so conspicuous a part. This order caused me to hesitate in considerable perplexity as to what I ought to do. At length, the indications growing more threatening toward the left, I

resolved, without regard to orders, to make the movement before contemplated. I found Colonel Oates with his two regiments facing the enemy, and protected by a pile of logs. His line was nearly at right angles to that of General Perry, who, I was surprised to see, had not changed his front. His left was projecting toward the enemy, a hundred yards or more beyond Colonel Oates. The skirmishers were already firing. There was a gap between Colonel Oates' right and General Perry's line. This was hastily filled with the Fourth Alabama, now hardly one hundred strong, and the other two regiments were hurried to the left of the Forty-eighth. The position was a strong one. I had no fear in regard to an attack in front, but felt sure that the line was too short to meet the advancing force. Captain L. R. Terrell was sent in haste to General Lee to explain the situation and ask for help, and I hastened to General Perry to induce him to change his front, so as to bring his brigade in alignment with mine. This would have doubled the front presented to the enemy, and extended me far enough to the left to give my flank the protection of the swamp, which has been frequently mentioned. It would probably have thrown one battalion across and down it, so as to deliver a flank fire upon the enemy as they advanced upon our front. General Perry readily consented. Five minutes' time was sufficient for the movement, but even that was denied us. Before the movement could be begun, the storm burst upon us with the greatest fury. The part of the Florida brigade which projected to the front, melted away, the men falling in promiscuously with mine. The fire of the enemy was returned with the greatest spirit, and the soldiers exhibited a sort of exultant confidence—a feeling which I was far from sharing with them. They seemed anxious to charge the enemy. An advance movement was actually begun without orders at one time by the Fifteenth, and at another, I believe, by the Forty-fourth. Captain Terrell returned with the tidings that reinforcements would soon arrive; but would they be in time? The ammunition of the men began to be exhausted. The direction of the firing to the left indicated that my worst apprehensions were likely to be soon realized. I hastened thither, and arrived in time to find the Forty-seventh doubling back and the enemy pouring round its flank. I endeavored to steady and reform it with its front so changed as to face them, but they were too near at hand and their momentum was too great. Nothing was left us but an inglorious retreat, executed in the shortest possible time and without regard to order.

It was the first time since its organization, and, until it folded its colors forever at Appomattox, it was the last, that the brigade ever was broken on the battlefield.

But the promised reinforcement came. It was not in time to save us from a great mortification; but it was in time to retrieve the disaster. It was Wofford's brigade of Kershaw's division. It swooped down upon the enemy in the midst of their exultation and confusion, and swept them away like chaff. I was hardly near enough, and was too busily engaged in reforming my men, to witness the achievement, and only knew that the enemy disappeared like an apparition, and subsequently learned the cause. The Florida brigade had narrowly escaped capture by falling back precipitately with my own. General Perry was severely wounded, and never rejoined his command.

Shortly after my brigade was reformed, General Heth moved up with a part, at least, of his division, and the two commands advanced together over the ground which had been the scene of our discomfiture, and far beyond. The extended lines of breastworks which the enemy had constructed, and various other indications, proved that the attack upon our flank had been made with a heavy force. They were troops of Burnside's corps, probably one or both of the divisions with which he had reinforced Hancock the night before. Considering their numbers, their effort has always seemed to me a feeble one. They had been preparing for the attack several hours, had stopped to fortify, and then advanced slowly and timidly upon the exposed flank of a small force. When their attack came, they were held in check a long while by twelve hundred men, and were finally driven away by a single brigade. But they were gone. Profound silence reigned in those deep woods, which had so lately echoed with the thunder of battle. Night had come; the roar of the strife had ceased on the right. The forged thunder-bolt, aimed by a master's hand, still remained to be delivered from Ewell's left, to close the first act of the bloody drama of 1864, and to consign the battle of the Wilderness to history.

When the Muse of history shall have done her complete work, the conflict on the Orange plank-road that day will be set down as one of the most remarkable in the annals of warfare. Fifteen thousand men, half exhausted by a rapid march, press the head of their column upon a field already occupied by fifty thousand veterans, completely organized, ably commanded and drawn up in

dense array and perfect order. Nine thousand of them form line in the face of the foe at 7 o'clock, immediately assume the offensive, and roll back that mighty host a fourth of a mile in an hour. Pausing to recover breath, to adjust their lines, and to await the arrival of their comrades, they again attack at 9 o'clock, and again press back the foe, disorganized and shattered, to "reform behind their breastworks." Cheated out of a complete victory by the fall of their leader, they pause to recover their exhausted strength. At 4 o'clock they summon their energies for a final assault upon that triple line of fortifications. The result serves to indicate how easy the victory would have been at 9 o'clock, before time had been allowed to reform. Let an eye witness, the correspondent of the *New York World*, tell the story: "Mott's division fell back in confusion; Stevenson's division gave way confusedly, compelling the left center to fall back some distance. One of its regiments was captured almost in a body. There was imminent danger of a general break. * * * Stragglers for the first time streamed to the rear in large numbers, choking the roads, and causing a panic by their stampede. It was even reported at headquarters that the enemy had broken entirely through."*

But again capricious Fortune snatches the victory from their grasp. Neither a Jackson nor a Longstreet is there to seize the critical moment, and by a general advance to overwhelm the foe, now tottering on the verge of ruin. The assailing force is not supported. They reach the limit of endurance; their progress ceases. At length, assailed in flank, they sullenly retire.

And now, after the almost superhuman exertions which they have put forth, those frowning lines still confront them; that coveted prize, the road to Richmond, is still in possession of the foe. The victory which they have gained becomes a shadow in their grasp; but the glory which they have won neither disaster nor overthrow, nor years of humiliation and suffering, nor time itself, can ever dim. Many a day of toil and night of watching, many a weary march and tempest of fire, still await those grim and ragged veterans; but they have taught the world a lesson that will not soon be forgotten, and have lighted up the gloom of that dark forest with a radiance that will abide so long as heroism awakens a glow of admiration in the hearts of men.

W. F. PERRY.

GLENDALE, KENTUCKY.

* Quoted by Mr. Leigh Robinson.

Gettysburg.

By Major-General LAFAYETTE McLAW.

[We know that some of our readers have grown weary of the Gettysburg discussion, but on the other hand we have assurances from every quarter that the papers on this great battle have been of deep interest and *invaluable* as "material for the future historian." The following paper, by the commander of a division in Longstreet's corps, was read some months ago before the *Georgia Historical Society*, and should have been promptly admitted into our series had it been sent to us originally.

We print it just as we have received it, albeit the distinguished soldier who wrote it might probably have modified certain portions of it had he had opportunity of reading our series before preparing it.]

After the battle of Chancellorsville, General Hooker's army returned to its position on the Washington side of the Rappahannock, and that of General Lee reoccupied its old grounds opposite Hooker, on the Richmond side, in and around Fredericksburg.

As it was evident that the Federal army could not be attacked as it stood, except under great disadvantages, it was determined to turn its flank and to transfer the war into the enemy's country.

Accordingly, on the 3d of June, 1863, my division moved from its camps in and around Fredericksburg, and took position at Culpeper Courthouse. Hood's division followed mine and then came Ewell's corps—Hill's corps being left to watch the movements of Hooker's army, with orders to follow our movements so soon as Hooker could be manœuvred out of his position.

Shortly after our arrival at Culpeper, Hooker's cavalry made such a sudden and unexpected irruption across the Rappahannock, that, though driven back with loss, they captured General Stuart's headquarters with all his orders and correspondence, and forced General Lee to display his infantry or partially to do so. From both these sources General Hooker was satisfied that General Lee was on the move, and it was a reasonable presumption that he was trying to turn his flanks, in order to try the issue of battle on the same grounds, and under the same circumstances, that he had defeated General Pope's army at the second Manassas.

Accordingly, General Hooker concentrated his army so as to cover Washington, and be prepared to give front to General Lee, let him come from what direction he might.

General Lee's army was at this time very much scattered, his advance being over one hundred miles or more from Hill's corps,

still at Fredericksburg. But General Hooker, who must have been aware of this, did not attempt to take advantage of the situation.

When Hooker withdrew from Hill's front at Fredericksburg that officer moved with his corps, following the rear of General Lee's army, and, passing Longstreet, advanced into Maryland; while Longstreet, marching more leisurely, moved to the east of the mountains, so as to still further confirm the notion that it was General Lee's intention to attack on Virginia soil. Reaching Ashby's Gap, Longstreet's corps turned west, and crossing the Shenandoah pushed on after Ewell, who was then in Pennsylvania.

I recollect the evening. We had waded the Shenandoah and had just gone into camp on the other side, when a courier or staff officer dashed into my camp with orders for my division to recross the river and hurry back into Ashby's Gap, as the enemy's cavalry, supported by infantry, had driven Stuart's cavalry into the gap and it was apprehended their advance would seize the gap. The fording was deep, up to the arm pits of the shorter men, but the command went forward with great alacrity, and meeting great numbers of the cavalry coming to the rear and crossing the river on their horses, while the infantry were getting wet to take their places. The greeting the cavalry received was anything but complimentary. The night on the mountain was very uncomfortable, being cold and wet. But the next morning one of my brigades crossed over to the eastern side of the mountain as far as a small village some miles from the gap, where an advance of the enemy, both cavalry and infantry, had encamped. As our men appeared the enemy disappeared, and the brigade rejoined the division. The cavalry again advanced, and the division, recrossing the Shenandoah, continued its march and waded the Potomac at Williamsport, on the Maryland shore.

The wading across the Potomac was very deep and the men were very wet, and, as there was a quantity of whiskey in the city, a gill apiece was given to each man that wanted it, and in justice to my division I will assert that I never heard of any one refusing it. The consequence was that the men were all in good humor, and as my division halted a considerable time, the men roamed over the village. While sitting on my horse near a large brick building called the Washington Bank (I think that was the name) Captain G. B. Lamar, my aid-de-camp, rode up and informed me that the United States flag was being waved from the upper story of the bank building, and as there were a good many men of Hood's and my division

in town who were under the influence of liquor, he was apprehensive that some insult might be offered to the family within the house unless the flag was withdrawn before I left. I therefore directed him to knock at the front door and tell some responsible person within of the circumstance and give them my request that the flag be withdrawn, at least until the command had passed on. Captain Lamar did as directed, and afterwards told me that the lady of the house had answered his knock, and on being told his reason for coming, turned very pale, and, clasping her hands, assured him that the flag was being displayed by some young persons without her knowledge. Captain Lamar told her that there was no harm done, but to prevent any being done, he requested that the flag be taken in, and it was done at once. This reminds me of an incident that happened while on the march through Frederick City on our previous campaign of invasion. General Howell Cobb's brigade, a very large and fine one indeed, was marching with a band of music playing through the streets—the General at the head of his column—when two ladies appeared on a balcony waving two small flags. The General, a gallant gentleman as he was, with the ladies as in war, pulled off his hat and bowed to them with great courtesy, his men cheering in unison; but presently the cheering was succeeded by a burst of laughter from the rear, and as the General turned to find out the cause, the men shouted, "Why, General, those are Federal flags!" The General, not at all disconcerted, replied at once: "Never mind, boys, that is not the first time I have pulled off my hat to that flag!" and the men cheered more than before, and the column went on in the best of humor. I mention this to show with what little unworthy and ungenerous feeling our men went into the invasion, and scorned to give offense or insult where it could not be resented.

But to resume the march. My division finally went through Chambersburg and into camp about a mile beyond. The country was thickly settled and finely cultivated, with some excellent gardens. I recollect one near my headquarters which abounded with vegetables, and the sight was so tantalizing that finally a party of my command came and asked if I would not negotiate for some of them. Accordingly, I paid a formal visit to the lady of the mansion, where the garden was, and telling her the purpose of my visit asked if she would sell some or all her vegetables—informing her, however, that we had but Confederate money wherewith to pay, but if she preferred it I would give her a certificate of what was

taken. She replied that from what she had heard of the way the Federal troops treated our people she thought we had a right to take without asking. I told her that, without discussing that question, it was sufficient to say that General Lee had forbidden us to plunder. She then said that she gave her permission for us to take anything we wanted, and at my request she went herself and gave her vegetables away. I had her name in a little memorandum book, where I jotted down daily occurrences, but it has passed away from my memory.

While in camp I heard that General Ewell was in Carlisle and York, and had gone, or portions of his command had, towards Harrisburg, and had marched where he pleased without opposition.

On the 30th June my command was put in march towards Gettysburg, and camped, I think, at or near Greencastle, receiving orders to march the next day.

We had heard the day before or heard it here that Ewell's corps had been ordered to return to the main command, because General Lee had been informed that the Federal army had crossed the Potomac, and was marching northward. And before moving, on the first, I received orders to follow in rear of Johnson's division of Ewell's corps, which had been detached from the corps to conduct Ewell's trains west of the mountains, while the rest of the corps came by the shortest route to General Lee's headquarters.

Accordingly I had my division ranged alongside of the road to Gettysburg by eight o'clock on the 1st of July, in the order of march, and had not been long in place before Johnson's division appeared. After it had passed I went to Major Fairfax, of General Longstreet's staff, and asked if I should follow the troops or wait until Ewell's train had passed. Fairfax rode to General Longstreet to find out, and shortly returned with directions to wait until the train had passed. As the train appeared to be a very long one I had its rate of travel timed as it passed over a known distance, and computed its length to be over fourteen miles.

At any rate it was not until after four o'clock that it had passed, and I then took up the line of march to the front. About five o'clock, as we rose the hills between our camp of the morning and Gettysburg, we heard distinctly the sound of cannon, and a cheer went from the column, while the men quickened their pace to the music of the guns. The march was continued, and about ten P. M. I met General Longstreet in the road, and he informed me there had been an engagement; General Heth was wounded; the enemy

driven back with a loss of 5,000 prisoners. He then directed me to go into camp at the water course, then some miles distant, which I reached a little after twelve at night, and camped or rather rested. Some time after my arrival I received orders from General Longstreet to continue the march at four A. M., but the order was afterwards countermanded, with directions not to leave until sunrise. The march was continued at a very early hour, and my command reached the hill overlooking Gettysburg early in the morning. Just after I arrived General Lee sent for me—as the head of my column was halted within a hundred yards of where he was—and I went at once and reported. General Lee was sitting on a fallen tree with a map beside him. After the usual salutation, General Lee remarked: "General, I wish you to place your division across this road," pointing on the map to about the place I afterwards went to, and directing my attention to about the place across the country from where we were, the position being a commanding one; "and I wish you to get there if possible without being seen by the enemy." The place he pointed out was about the one I afterwards went to, and the line he marked out on the map for me to occupy was one perpendicular to the Emmettsburg road. He finally remarked: "Can you get there?" or "can you do it?" I replied that I knew of nothing to prevent me, but would take a party of skirmishers and go in advance and reconnoitre." He said "Major Johnston, of my staff, has been ordered to reconnoitre the ground, and I expect he is about ready." I then remarked, "I will go with him." Just then General Longstreet, who, when I came up, was walking back and forth some little distance from General Lee, and hearing my proposition or request to reconnoitre, spoke quickly and said: "No, sir, I do not wish you to leave your division," and then, pointing to the map, said: "I wish your division placed so," running his finger in a direction perpendicular to that pointed out by General Lee. General Lee replied: "No, General, I wish it placed just perpendicular to that," or "just the opposite." I then reiterated my request to go with Major Johnston, but General Longstreet again forbade it. General Lee said nothing more, and I left them, and, joining my command, put it under cover under a line of woods a short distance off. General Longstreet appeared as if he was irritated and annoyed, but the cause I did not ask. When I rejoined my command I sent my engineer officer, Lieutenant Montcure, to go and join Major Johnston, and gave him instructions what to observe particularly, as he was an officer in whom I had

confidence, but was ordered back. I then reconnoitred myself for my own information, and was soon convinced that by crossing the ridge where I then was, my command could reach the point indicated by General Lee, in a half hour, without being seen. I then went back to the head of my column and sat on my horse and saw in the distance the enemy coming, hour after hour, on to the battle ground.

At length—my recollection is that it was about 1 P. M.—Major Johnston, of General Lee's staff, came to me and said he was ordered to conduct me on the march. My command was at once put in motion—Major Johnston and myself riding some distance ahead. Suddenly, as we rose a hill on the road we were taking, the Round Top was plainly visible, with the flags of the signal men in rapid motion. I sent back and halted my division and rode with Major Johnston rapidly around the neighborhood to see if there was any road by which we could go into position without being seen. Not finding any I joined my command and met General Longstreet there, who asked, "What is the matter?" I replied, "Ride with me and I will show you that we can't go on this route, according to instructions, without being seen by the enemy." We rode to the top of the hill and he at once said, "Why this won't do. Is there no way to avoid it?" I then told him of my reconnoissance in the morning, and he said: "How can we get there?" I said: "Only by going back—by countermarching." He said: "Then all right," and the movement commenced. But as General Hood, in his eagerness for the fray (and he bears the character of always being so), had pressed on his division behind mine so that it lapped considerably, creating confusion in the countermarch, General Longstreet rode to me and said: "General, there is so much confusion, owing to Hood's division being mixed up with yours, suppose you let him countermarch first and lead in the attack." I replied: "General, as I started in the lead, let me continue so;" and he replied, "Then go on," and rode off.

After very considerable difficulty, owing to the rough character of the country in places and the fences and ditches we had to cross, the countermarch was effected, and my troops were moving easily forward along a road with fences on the side not giving room enough for a company front, making it necessary to break files to the rear, when General Longstreet rode up to me, and said: "How are you going in?" and I replied, "That will be determined when I can see what is in my front." He said: "There is nothing in your

front; you will be entirely on the flank of the enemy." I replied, "Then I will continue my march in columns of companies, and after arriving on the flank as far as is necessary will face to the left and march on the enemy." He replied, "That suits me," and rode away. My head of column soon reached the edge of the woods, and the enemy at once opened on it with numerous artillery, and one rapid glance showed them to be in force much greater than I had, and extending considerably beyond my right. My command, therefore, instead of marching on as directed, by head of column, deployed at once. Kershaw, a very cool, judicious and gallant gentleman, immediately turned the head of his column and marched by flank to right, and put his men under cover of a stone wall. Barksdale, the fiery, impetuous Mississippian, following, came into line on the left of Kershaw, his men sheltered by trees and part of a stone wall and under a gentle declivity. Besides the artillery firing, the enemy were advancing a strong line of skirmishers and threatening an advance in line. I hurried back to quicken the march of those in rear, and sent orders for my artillery to move to my right and open fire, so as to draw the fire of the opposite artillery from my infantry. I will here state that I had in my division about six thousand, aggregate—which, I think, is over the mark.

. Well, six thousand men standing in line would occupy over a mile, and in marching in the manner and over the roads we came they would extend a mile and a half. So you will perceive that to form line of battle by directing troops across the country broken by fences and ditches requires considerable time, and it was difficult, from the same causes, to get the artillery in position.

While this was going on I rode forward, and getting off my horse, went to some trees in advance and took a good look at the situation, and the view presented astonished me, as the enemy was massed in my front, and extended to my right and left as far as I could see.

The firing on my command showed to Hood in my rear that the enemy was in force in my front and right, and the head of his column was turned by General Longstreet's order to go on my right, and as his troops appeared, the enemy opened on them, developing a long line to his right even, and way up to the top of Round Top. Thus was presented a state of affairs which was certainly not contemplated when the original plan or order of battle was given, and certainly was not known to General Longstreet a half hour previous.

As I have already stated, General Longstreet had informed me just previous to my arriving in view of the enemy's position, that I would arrive entirely on their flank, and he wished me to march into my position in column of companies, and when well on the enemy's flank to face or form line to the left and march down upon them. General Kershaw in his report says, his brigade being at the head of my column, that General Longstreet came to him while marching, and told him that his (General Longstreet's) desire was, that he (Kershaw) should attack the enemy at the peach orchard, turn his flank and extend along the cross road with his left resting towards the Emmetsburg road. You can see by the accompanying map what a very different state of affairs existed from what General Longstreet must have thought really did, as it would simply have been absurd for General Kershaw to have attempted to do as he was required or desired.

General Hood writes that his orders were to place his division across the Emmetsburg road, form line and attack; but that from a rapid reconnoissance he saw that if he made the attack according to orders he should first be compelled to attack and drive off the advanced line of battle, to pass over a very broken, rocky character of country, which would scatter his men very much, and that his division would be exposed to a heavy fire from the main line of the enemy, posted on the crest of the high range of which Round Top was the extreme left, and that he would be subjected to a destructive fire in flank and rear as well as in front. As bad as he represents the difficulties to be overcome, if he attempted to carry out his orders, I would have been in a worse position if I had attempted to carry out mine, as the main body of the enemy was directly in my front, and the enemy's numerous batteries were posted in front of me in the peach orchard and to its rear. General Hood says he reported that it was unwise to attack up the Emmetsburg road as ordered, and urged that he be allowed to turn Round Top and attack the enemy in flank and rear, but that General Longstreet returned answer: "General Lee's orders are to attack up the Emmetsburg road."

That he went again, and reported that nothing was to be gained by such an attack, and the answer was: "General Lee's orders are to attack up the Emmetsburg road."

That during these intervals of time he had continued to use the batteries against the enemy, and it seemed to his more extended reconnoissance that the position occupied by the enemy was natu-

rally so strong, so nearly impregnable, that, independently of their flank fire, they could repel his attack by throwing stones down the mountain; and that a third time he dispatched a staff officer to explain more fully in regard to the situation, and to suggest that he (General Longstreet) come in person and see for himself, and that his Adjutant-General, whom he sent the last time, returned with the same message: "General Lee's orders are to attack up the Emmettsburg road;" and almost simultaneously Colonel Fairfax, of Longstreet's staff, rode up and repeated the order.

While this was going on an order came from General Longstreet, borne by Major Latrobe, such is my recollection, asking why did I not charge, "as there was no one in my front but a regiment of infantry and a battery of artillery." I told the officer that I would charge so soon as my division was formed for it; that the enemy was in great force in my immediate front, with numerous artillery, and extended far to the right. In a very short time after this the order was repeated, and I informed the officer again that the enemy was so strong in my front that it required careful preparation for the assault, or it necessarily would be a failure; that the opposite artillery was numerous, and it was necessary to break its force by the fire of our artillery; that as soon as it opened, and my men were all up, I would move forward, but requested that he come to the front and see for himself.

Not long after the order came peremptorily for me to charge, the officer representing that General Lee was with General Longstreet, and joined in the order, and I got on my horse and sent word that in five minutes I would be under way. But while collecting my staff to send the orders for a simultaneous move of the whole line, a courier dashed up with orders for me to wait until Hood got into position. I suppose by this time Hood's protests against attempting to charge up the Emmettsburg road had been received, and hence the delay. I sent to communicate with Hood at once in order to follow his movement. General Longstreet then came up in person and I met him. His first words were, "Why is not a battery placed here?" pointing to the place where the road by which we marched reached the edge of the open space in front. I replied, "General, if a battery is placed there it will draw the enemy's artillery right among my lines formed for the charge and will of itself be in the way of my charge, and tend to demoralize my men." His reply was only a peremptory order for a battery, and it was sent forward, placed in that position, and its fire at once drew the enemy's

fire of artillery upon it, cutting the limbs of the trees in abundance, which fell around my men, and the bursting shells and shot wounded or killed a number whilst in line formed for the advance, producing a natural feeling of uneasiness among them. I got on my horse and rode among them directing them to lie down, so as to escape as much as possible from the shot and shell which were being rained around us from a very short range. All this happened within fifteen or twenty minutes. Under cover of their fire the enemy were making strong demonstrations of an advance, and General Barksdale two or three times came to me and said, "General, let me go; General, let me charge!" But, as I was waiting General Longstreet's will, I told General Barksdale to wait and let the enemy come half way and then we would meet on more equal terms.

Hood had been in the meanwhile moving towards the enemy's left, but he never did go far enough to envelop the left, not even partially. It was said at the time, on the field, that he would have done so, but his guides and scouts, who had been around to the enemy's left in the morning, had gotten confused on their return with the division and missed carrying the head of column far enough to the right, and it became heavily engaged before Hood intended it, and being pressed on his left sent to me for assistance, and the charge of my division was ordered. General Kershaw, with his South Carolina brigade, leading, followed by Semmes with his Georgia brigade; then Barksdale, and Wofford last. The two last had been mixed up with the batteries which had been placed among their lines, and were temporarily delayed in extricating themselves therefrom. So much was it the case with one of Wofford's regiments that it did not get out to join the brigade until it had gone about one hundred yards. Coming on at a double quick the whole line as it advanced became heavily engaged, Kershaw and Semmes acting together on the right. These brigades gave mutual assistance, contending against odds which would have enveloped them, but Wofford's brilliant advance struck the attacking force in their flank and the enemy gave way, pursued by the whole line.

Barksdale, who, as I have said, had been exceedingly impatient for the order to advance, and whose enthusiasm was shared by his command, was standing ready to give the word, not far from me, and so soon as it was signified to me, I sent my aid-de-camp, Captain G. B. Lamar, Jr., to carry the order to General Barksdale, and

the result I express in Captain Lamar's words: "I had witnessed many charges marked in every way by unflinching gallantry—in some I had had the honor of participating when in the line with the First Georgia regulars—but I never saw anything to equal the dash and heroism of the Mississippians. You remember how anxious General Barksdale was to attack the enemy, and his eagerness was participated in by all his officers and men, and when I carried him the order to advance his face was radiant with joy. He was in front of his brigade, hat off, and his long white hair reminded me of the 'white plume of Navarre.' I saw him as far as the eye could follow, still ahead of his men, leading them on. The result you know. You remember the picket fence in front of his brigade? I was anxious to see how they would get over it and around it. When they reached it, the fence disappeared as if by magic, and the slaughter of the 'red breeched zouaves' on the other side was terrible!"

My whole line, or nearly all, reached the stone wall at the foot of the Little Round Top, and established itself temporarily there. A portion of Wofford's brigade occupied a position really in rear of the enemy's line on the left. So much so that General Bryan, then colonel of the Sixteenth Georgia, states that he would not allow his men to take possession of a battery from which the men had been driven, which was immediately in front of his regiment and distant about one hundred yards, for fear they would be captured.

But the whole line was so advanced and being without support on their flank, it was ordered to retire by General Longstreet, and I formed a new line, running from the peach orchard diagonally towards Round Top, from which it was concealed by the mass of woods in our front, which was held as far as half way across the wheat field by my skirmishers.

At the commencement of the charge, General Longstreet went forward some distance with Wofford's brigade, urging them on by voice and his personal example to the most earnest efforts. The troops needed no outside impulse, but his conduct was gallant and inspiring. I have no doubt but that when General Longstreet became suddenly aware of the true status of affairs, that instead of the head of his column debouching from the woods on the flank of the enemy (recollect the head of the column was conducted by General Lee's staff officer), they were suddenly confronted with superior forces, in position, and ready for the fight; and besides extending far away to his right, he was very much disconcerted and

annoyed, principally because it was evident at a glance that the plan of battle, so far as his forces were concerned, could not be carried out. For instead of attacking or moving with his forces down the Emmettsburg road, his lines perpendicular to it, leaving the enemy to either retire or change their front to meet his attack or to be attacked in turn in their flank by others of our troops joining in as we advanced (Hood and myself), the whole of our attack was against the front of the enemy, in position, prepared to receive us. The question then arises, was it General Longstreet's duty, or would he have been justified, when he became aware that General Lee's order could not be obeyed, that the reconnoissance on which they were based had been faulty, and that he had therefore given those orders under mistaken or false information, to have halted his command, and going back to General Lee, inform him of the true status of the enemy, and that his order of attack should be changed, as it was not the best under the circumstances?

Longstreet's two divisions were not strong enough to cover the front of attack, much less envelop the flank, and he should have been reinforced before making the assault he did.

You will find, as I proceed, that General Longstreet had been ordered to partially envelop the enemy's left and drive it in with his command. But the officer who had made the reconnoissance, and was appointed to lead his troops by the necessary route, to carry out the order, carried Longstreet's leading division not on the flank, but in the immediate presence of a superior force, and so close that he could not withdraw in order to march farther to the left without serious complications. It is true he could have waited, but he was, as I understood it, urged to the assault.

If Pickett's division had been with mine following it, I believe that Round Top could have been captured from my side, and we could have established ourselves there. But if Longstreet was waiting for Pickett, he was not allowed to wait long enough, because General Lee did not think the enemy's left was occupied so strongly as it was, even at that late hour, and was not made aware of the great natural strength of the enemy's position. If General Longstreet had taken the responsibility to report that the positions in his front were naturally so strong and were so strongly occupied that his force could not accomplish the important results that were expected, and insisted on a delay until his whole force was concentrated and a more thorough examination made, I do not think the battle would have been fought at all, but that General Lee

would have manœuvred to force an attack upon himself. Nor have I a doubt but that if the corps had moved boldly in position by eight or nine o'clock in the morning, as it could have done beyond question, that Round Top could have been occupied without any very considerable difficulty; *provided*, those positions were not occupied in force by the enemy until after twelve o'clock, as is *now* asserted. But as the information up to three o'clock or three and a half was so faulty as to create the impression in both General Longstreet's and General Lee's minds that the left was not then occupied in any force, I am very much inclined to the belief that it is not known whether those positions were held in force at ten o'clock in the morning of the second or were not occupied until much later in the day, and that the arguments concerning the delay in attacking of Longstreet's corps, so far as the enemy's non-occupation of Round Top and vicinity is concerned, is based in a great measure on information received from publications since the war.

When I had the brief interview with General Lee before mentioned, he did not appear to be particularly anxious that Longstreet should occupy the left. He certainly was in no hurry for it, for both Hood's and my division were put under cover, and remained resting within a half a mile of where I left him, and he went off, if he did, with a full knowledge that they were not in motion. My information at the time was that he was not decided positively as to the main point of attack, but was waiting for information. Of course I do not know what his real intentions were, as I cannot boast of his having taken me into his confidence; but I believe he gave his orders for the movement of Longstreet's assault based on information obtained very early in the morning.

I do not take it upon myself to say that General Longstreet is to be blamed for not disobeying his orders to attack when he became aware that, contrary to expectations, the enemy was in great force in his immediate front. For, as I understood Major Latrobe, General Lee was with him when the enemy had opened on my division, thus disclosing their immediate presence, and but a short while after Hood's reports must have been received; and if, under those circumstances, Longstreet had not engaged, there were some, I am grieved to say, in the army who would have ascribed his conduct to the worst of motives, or who might have done so—and his orders were positive—and the greater the danger there is in obeying an order, the more imperative is it upon an officer's honor to do his

best to carry it out. I therefore only assert my belief that if the attack had been delayed much better results would have followed.

General Lee, in his report, says: "Longstreet was directed to place the divisions of Hood and McLaws on the right of Hill, partially enveloping the enemy's left, which he was to drive in." General Hill was directed to threaten the enemy's centre, to prevent reinforcements being drawn to either wing and to co-operate with his right division in Longstreet's attack. General Ewell was directed to make a simultaneous demonstration upon the enemy's right, to be converted into a real attack should opportunity offer.

General Hill reports: "General Longstreet was to attack the left flank of the enemy and *sweep down his line*, and I was directed to co-operate with him with such of my brigades from the right as could join in with his troops in the attack." He further gives it as his understanding of Longstreet's position by saying: "The corps of General Longstreet was on my right and in a line, being nearly at right angles to mine." I have no doubt he reports Longstreet's position not from what he saw, but from what he knew were the orders of General Lee, that Longstreet should occupy, for my line was but an extension of his on the right, and even Hood, away to my right, never got positions at right angles. He may have tried to get that way, but did not succeed.

General Hill further says: "Soon after McLaws moved forward, General Anderson moved forward the brigades of Wilcox, Perry and Wright in echelon." And that would have been all right if Longstreet had enveloped the enemy's left, and "driving it in," had "swept down his line," but he did not. So the echelon attack was a mistake.

I have shown, I believe, that Longstreet never did obtain a position, when the enemy's left was partially enveloped, and never did "drive it in," nor was he able to "sweep down his line," and finally, in making the attempt he did, he was so hard pressed that my division, instead of joining Hood, as he swept down the enemy's line, was ordered in making a direct attack on the enemy's front, and both Hood and myself had as much as we could attend to to prevent our flanks being turned.

I have stated that General Lee must have given his orders for the attack based upon false information, or perhaps it would be better to say wrong information. I am unable to find out who ever did reconnoitre the left, excepting that Major Johnston was ordered to so. This I know, for General Lee himself told me.

But when Major Johnston, who was conducting my division, came suddenly in view of Round Top, with the enemy's signal flags waving thereon, he appeared equally astonished as I was; and, therefore, if General Lee was relying on his report, he was misinformed as to the true condition of affairs.

I had been forbidden to reconnoître; so had my engineer officer. General Longstreet had not done it, and General Lee had not; and therefore it must have been that Major Johnston had gone there early in the morning, and not seeing any one had so reported, and if after that time a different state of affairs was known by anybody to exist, it had not been reported to either General Lee or General Longstreet; at least it appears so. All this resulted from defective and deficient organization of our staff corps; not from anybody's fault, but from the force of circumstances. We read since the war that there was an abundance of reconnoitering on our left, but very little, if any, on our right.

The night of the 2d was spent in reorganization and attending the wounded, as I had one Brigadier-General (Barksdale) killed, one (General Semmes) mortally wounded, and many colonels and officers of less rank killed and wounded.

The Chief Surgeon reported that I had lost in killed, wounded and missing twenty-three hundred and forty.

One company, numbering thirty-seven, had, by the bursting of a shell in its front as it went into the charge, lost thirty men—six killed, leaving but seven unhurt.

I will read here a short extract from General Longstreet's account of the charge of the divisions of Hood and myself, as he was in position to see general results untrammelled by attention to details:

"Before pursuing this narrative further, I shall say a word or two concerning this assault. I am satisfied that my force, numbering hardly thirteen thousand men, encountered during that three and a half hours of bloody work, not less than sixty-five thousand of the Federals, and yet their charge was not checked nor their line broken until we ordered them to withdraw. Mr. Whitelaw Reid, writing a most excellent account of this charge to the *Cincinnati Gazette*, says: 'It was believed from the terrific attack that the whole Rebel army, Ewell's corps included, was massed on our centre and left, and so a single brigade was left to hold the rifle pits on the right and the rest hurried across the little neck of land to strengthen our weakening lines.' He describes, too, the haste with which corps after corps was hurried forward to the left to check the advance of my two-thirds of one corps.

General Meade himself testifies (see his official report) that the Third, the Second, the Fifth, the Sixth and the Eleventh corps, all of the Twelfth except one brigade, and part of the First corps, engaged my handful of heroes during that glorious but disastrous afternoon. I found that night that 4,529 of my men, more than one-third their total number, had been left on the field. History records no parallel to the fight made by these two divisions on the 2d of July at Gettysburg."

In the early morning of the 3d my new line was carefully revised. Kershaw and Semmes' brigades towards the Round Top, and the others extending diagonally towards the peach orchard—all concealed by the woods from the batteries on the hills. My skirmish line was to the front, commanding half way across the wheat field, which is shown on the map.

We lay undisturbed by the enemy. The exertion and excitement of the previous day had been tremendous, and excepting burying parties, those engaged in attending to the wounded and collecting and stacking arms, my division was resting.

What the next move was to be was unknown to me. My troops were in close proximity to the enemy, and my front was covered with woods.

If the enemy had determined to commence the offensive, my command would become engaged at very short notice, and I therefore stayed with it.

I was not notified that it was in contemplation even to make any further attack by either Hood's or my division, nor was I informed that it was the intention to assault the enemy's centre with Pickett's division, with the assistance of troops from other corps. I was not told to be ready to assist, should the assault be successful, nor instructed what to do should the assault fail and the enemy advance. I contented myself with reconnoitering my ground and vicinity in all the directions necessary for movement in any emergency, and took my position among my troops. I became early aware that the artillery was concentrating along my rear, on the crest occupied by my line before I advanced, and that not only the corps artillery but the guns from Hill's corps and others were preparing for a grand opening. And when the numerous guns opened, shaking the very earth between the opposing armies, the shot and shell from the batteries on our right poured over my command: those of the enemy crossing ours, going in opposite directions, but all bent on the same mission of destruction.

Not a shot, as I can remember, fell among my men. We were

resting entirely undisturbed, excepting now and then a bomb shot would come from Round Top, fired at some of us moving about, and got in view of the batteries, in mere wantonness, as the chance of hitting was very small, and they did not care to waste a shell on one, two or three. The enemy appeared to be waiting the assault to follow the storm of shot and shell. Of course there was not a soldier in either army of any experience who did not know that an assault was to be made somewhere, and the shells, as they bursted over the enemy's lines, gave of themselves a pretty sure indication to them that it was on their centre that the shock was to be given. Not only was that a sign, but undoubtedly they could see our preparations from every prominent signal station from Round Top on their left to the Cemetery on their right, and disposed their forces, stationed their reserves, and made all other needful preparations to meet the shock, and to meet it at the exact portion of their lines it was made. The forces of the enemy were on a crest overlooking our position, the hill, known as Cemetery Hill, declining to their rear, so that they could move their troops without being seen by us, whilst our movements were plainly visible for fully a mile distant on an average along our entire front; and down the main roads for a mile further all between the armies was swept by artillery. I sat on my horse watching the shells passing over me, now bursting over artillery, now over the enemy's lines and then suddenly against Round Top, until it became monotonous, as the results could but be conjectured. But finally, during a temporary lull in the artillery fire, my attention was attracted by seeing a number of my command, among them General Wofford on horseback, looking intently down our lines towards Gettysburg, and I rode in that direction and saw the advancing Confederates moving to the charge on the enemy's centre. The sight was magnificent, it was grand, as it stirred all the highest and deepest emotions of our nature, of admiration for the splendid bearing and courage of our Southern men, mingled with a heartfelt prayer for the most fortunate results; but of reasonable hope of real success, based on what one could see, there was none. I had had some such feelings aroused many years before, during the siege of Vera Cruz, when looking at a number of strong ships, well manned and equipped, having on board our sick, our ammunition and supplies and our soldiers' wives, being driven by the irresistible force of a norther against a sandy shore. Their destruction as ships was a foregone conclusion, and the only thing we who saw them coming

could do, in our blind bewilderment, was to "pray that God would have mercy on the crew." The irresistible force which operated here was the military honor to obey his orders, which actuated the leader of the charge, that noble, chivalrous, fearless, high-toned gentleman and old army officer, General George E. Pickett, and the pride and courage of the Army of Northern Virginia, which made them eager to try to do whatever General Lee ordered.

It was a charge upon the enemy's centre, made by Pickett's division and Heth's, advancing in two lines; Pickett on the right, Wilcox's brigade marching in rear of Pickett's to guard that flank, and Heth's division was supported by Lane's and Scales' brigades under General Trimble. I was far in advance of the main Confederate line, and could see along both the advancing Confederates and those of the enemy lying couchant to resist their charge.

Our troops moved steadily under a heavy fire, the main attack being against the left centre of the enemy. The enemy's artillery, which had slackened just previous to the charge, now reopened with renewed energy, whilst our batteries slackened theirs because of decreased ammunition, which enabled the enemy to move their infantry from other portions of the field, reinforcing their front and moving to attack the flanks of the assailing force. But in spite of all this, the first line of the enemy was reached by our men and taken possession of, a large number leaping over and dashing at the second line, a great number sheltering themselves behind the stone walls or fortifications of the first line. But all this was but momentary, for the enemy, rushing their reinforcements, overpowered our men; the most advanced, or most of them, threw down their arms and surrendered, as also did many behind the first line captured. The rest fled in confusion, and what is known as Pickett's charge was over, with no results but the exemplification of the spirit and daring of our people. The enemy did not pursue, but rested content with the success so miraculously given to them. I looked around on my command, very few of whom were aware of the tremendous sacrifice that had been consummated. They were all in place, and needed but to be called to be ready, and seeing no necessity for arousing them I said not a word, but let them rest on.

General Lee, in his report, says, in reference to this charge of Pickett's:

"The general plan was unchanged (that is, the plan of the 2d). Longstreet, reinforced by Pickett's three brigades, which arrived near the battlefield during the afternoon of the 2d, was ordered to

attack the next morning, and General Ewell was directed to assail the enemy's right at the same time." I never heard that such was even contemplated. Again, he continues: "General Longstreet's dispositions were not completed as early as was expected, but before notice could be sent to General Ewell, General Johnson had already become engaged, and it was too late to recall him;" and then goes on to relate the causes of his failure, one of them being because the projected attack on the enemy's left had not been made, thus enabling him to occupy his right with a largely superior force; and again, he says (I quote exactly): "General Longstreet was delayed by a force occupying the high rocky hills on the enemy's extreme left, from which his troops could be attacked in reverse as they advanced; his operations had been embarrassed the day previous by the same cause, and he now deemed it necessary to defend his flank and rear with the divisions of Hood and McLaws. He was therefore reinforced by Heth's division and two brigades of Pender's, to the command of which Major-General Trimble was assigned."

If General Longstreet did not attack early on the 3d, as General Lee says he was ordered to do, his reasons for not doing so appear to have been perfectly satisfactory to General Lee; and as the same causes were in existence when Pickett's charge was made, it is not to be disputed that General Lee could not have expected Longstreet's two right divisions to take part in that charge.

In his account of what is known as Pickett's charge, General Lee says—and as General Lee's report was published before his death, and was uncontradicted, or was not disputed, I take it for granted that what he there says, in regard to his own orders and his own intentions, etc., cannot now be questioned:

"The troops moved steadily on under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery against the enemy's left centre, whose batteries reopened as soon as they appeared. Our own having nearly exhausted their ammunition in the protracted cannonade that preceded the advance of the infantry, were unable to reply or render the necessary support to the attacking party. *Owing to this fact, which was unknown to me when the assault took place,* the enemy was enabled to throw a strong force of infantry against our left, already wavering from the concentrated fire of artillery from the ridge in front, and from Cemetery Hill on the left."

It was about this stage in the charge that I saw the advance. It is intimated here by General Lee that if he had known that our artillery ammunition was so exhausted as to be unable to reply at the critical moment, that the charge would not have been made.

Who did know it? Whose duty was it to know it, and whose duty was it to report the fact to General Lee? And why was it not done?

General Pickett, if he had known it, would never, under the circumstances, have demurred to the charge. He would have died first.

General Lee does not say anything about General Longstreet not advancing his two divisions. If you will observe this map, which is a copy of the one carefully prepared by the Federals since the war, showing the positions of the Federal troops, you will observe that the largest mass of Federal troops seem to have been on that day—the 3d of July—posted between my left and Pickett's right, and at the place or near it where Longstreet's two corps—Hood's and mine—would have had to have attacked, if it had been intended they should, in order to have been of service in aiding Pickett's charge.

All along from Main Round Top on to Little Round Top and to its foot and extending to their right, the enemy's lines had been fortified during the previous night and strengthened with additional troops, rendering the few places which were assailable with some chances of success on the 2d entirely unassailable with any prospect of accomplishment on the 3d. So it would have been of no use to Pickett for Hood and myself to have made a direct assault on our direct front. But we would have had to have attacked about where you see that mass of troops is lying, or was, and in attempting it we would have exposed our flanks and rear to artillery and infantry fire, besides the resistance of the tremendous force which would meet us in front. The right of Pickett and my left were by no means in close proximity. There was a gap of a half mile between—it looked so to me—and I therefore do not believe that we could have effected anything, and if we had been repulsed as Pickett was, which would not have been at all improbable under the circumstances as above stated, and the enemy had then advanced their whole line, the consequences might have been more serious than they proved to be. I therefore do not think that it was ever expected by General Lee that Hood's and my division should take part in the charge unless we had been moved round and enveloped the enemy's left; and yet without more help than we had—more co-operation—it is difficult to conceive how Pickett could have been expected to be successful against the whole Federal army.

Those writers who have attempted to lay the blame upon Longstreet's corps for the non-success of the battle, either on the 2d or 3d, I believe are entirely ignorant of the difficulties which his troops had to encounter. This can be ascribed but to the want of proper reconnoissance having been made before the general plan of attack had been determined on; and it was assumed then, from hasty reports, made probably by persons not skilled in such matters, that there was not much to be overcome, and this erroneous opinion was never corrected. The enemy's forces occupied a line along the crest of Cemetery Hill, including Round Top and Little Round Top, which, from Crup's Hill on their extreme right to Round Top, was about three miles long. The Confederates partially enveloped Crup's Hill and extended in a continued line around to extreme left, and about a mile distant from the enemy's line.

The enemy are said to have had one hundred thousand men. Let us assume, for the comparison, that they were all infantry in both armies. Now, three miles is $5,280 \times 3 = 15,840$ feet. A man in close ranks is allowed two feet of space; he takes more in the fight. Thus in a space of three miles a double rank containing 15,840 would form one line of battle without intervals. Thus the enemy could have formed over six lines of battle, one behind the other, concentric. This hill or ridge on which they were posted was, as I have before stated, higher than the one we had been on, and descended from the crest to their rear, as it did toward's us. They were thus enabled to move their troops from one point to another without being seen by us. The Confederates, so I read, had 60,000 men, and occupied, I believe, a curve five miles long; five miles is $5,280 \times 5 = 26,400$ feet, or 26,400 men it would take to occupy our line shoulder to shoulder; two lines would take 52,800 men, or not quite two lines and a third; or the enemy could have put three lines of battle in position and then have had 52,480 men in reserve, or a force in reserve nearly equal to Lee's army. The enemy were compact and protected, and had free intercourse between their forces and signal stations everywhere, in every commanding position. They could see all over our positions and commanded all the approaches with a powerful artillery, and yet our army attacked them in detached masses at different points, widely separated, and not acting in conjunction. Why it was so, or whose fault it was, I do not pretend to assert; but that it was so, no one will deny. As a further illustration of this, I will, with your per-

mission, read a short account of an assault made by A. R. Wright's brigade of Georgians, Hill's corps, Anderson's division:

Official Report of Wright's Brigade.

GETTYSBURG, July, 1863.

On the morning of the 1st of July moved my brigade from its camp, near Fayetteville, Pennsylvania, in the direction of Gettysburg. Between 4 and 5 o'clock P. M. the brigade reached a position near Gettysburg, where it remained until next morning. About seven o'clock on the morning of the 2d of July, I received orders to move my brigade by the right flank, following Perry's brigade, and occupied a position (on Seminary Ridge) previously held by Davis' brigade of Heth's division. About twelve o'clock I was informed by Major-General Anderson that an attack upon the enemy's line would soon be made by the whole division, commencing on our right by Wilcox's brigade, and that each brigade of the division would begin the attack as soon as the brigade on its immediate right would commence the movement. I was instructed to move simultaneously with Perry's brigade on my right, and informed that Posey's brigade on my left would move forward upon my advancing. About 5 o'clock P. M. the signal was given by Wilcox and Perry on my right advancing. I immediately ordered forward my brigade against the strong position of the enemy, on a range of mountains, distant a mile or a mile and a half, and separated from us by open plains, intersected by numerous post and rail fences, farm houses and barns. This ground was swept by the enemy's artillery posted along the Emmettsburg road and on the crest of the heights on McPherson's farm, a little south of Cemetery Hill. My men moved forward until reaching within musket range of the Emmettsburg road, where we encountered a strong body of infantry, posted under cover of the fences parallel with that road. Just in rear of this line was the advanced batteries of the enemy, raking the whole field. Just before reaching this position I had observed that Posey's brigade on my left had not advanced, and fearing that if I proceeded much further with my left flank entirely unprotected that I might become involved in serious difficulties, I dispatched my aid-de-camp, Captain Bell, with a message to Major-General Anderson. To this message he replied, "Press on"—he had ordered Posey in on my left and would reiterate the order. I immediately charged upon the enemy and drove him in great confusion upon a second line, formed behind a stone fence, some hundred yards in rear of the Emmettsburg road. Having gained the Emmettsburg road, we again charged upon the enemy posted behind the stone fence. Here the enemy made considerable resistance, but were finally forced to retire. We were now within a hundred yards of the crest of the heights, which were lined with artillery, supported by a strong body of infantry. My men, by a well directed fire, shoot down the cannoners from

their guns, and leaping the stone fence charge up to the top of the crest, and drive the enemy's infantry into a rocky gorge on the eastern slope of the heights, some hundred yards in rear of the enemy's batteries. We were now complete masters of the field. Just as we had carried the enemy's last and strongest position, it was discovered that the brigade on our right (Perry's) had not advanced across the turnpike, but had actually given away, and was rapidly falling back to the rear, while on our left we were entirely unsupported—the brigade (Posey's) ordered to our support having failed to advance. My advanced position and the unprotected condition of my flanks invited an attack. The enemy immediately passed a heavy body of infantry—under cover of a high ledge of rocks and stunted undergrowth—from the gorge, and emerging from the ridge upon my right, equi-distant from the stone fence and the Emmettsburg turnpike; while a large brigade advanced from the woods on our left, and, gaining the turnpike, moved rapidly along that road to meet the force upon my right and rear. The enemy's converging lines were rapidly closing upon our rear. No supports could be seen coming to our assistance. With painful hearts we abandoned our captured guns, prepared to cut our way through the closing lines in our rear. This was effected in tolerable order, but with immense loss. The enemy rushed to his abandoned guns as soon as we began to retire, and poured a severe fire of grape and cannister into our thinned ranks as we slowly retired down the slope and into the valley below. I continued to fall back until I reached a slight depression, a few hundred yards in advance of our line of the morning. Finding that the enemy was not disposed to advance, a line of skirmishers was thrown out, and a little after dark my command moved to the position taken in the morning.

I have not the slightest doubt but that I should have been able to have maintained my position on the heights and secured the captured artillery if there had been a protecting force on my left, or if the brigade on my right had not been forced to retire. We captured over twenty pieces of artillery, which we were compelled to abandon.

Of our sixteen hundred and odd that went into the fight, five hundred and fifty-four were all that answered afterwards—over one thousand men of a small brigade killed, wounded or captured.

I do not recollect an instance in ancient or modern warfare where so small a body of troops, entirely unsupported, as this brigade was, has accomplished so much. Charging through an open field for more than a mile; attacking a superior force posted on a mountain; climbing the side of the mountain; driving the enemy from behind a stone wall; shooting the gunners and capturing the cannon; then, when surrounded, literally cutting their way out; retiring in good order, preventing the enemy from pursuing them. This Wright's brigade has done, and the few surviving heroes may well be proud of their achievement. Although I knew their char-

acter, well knew they were capable of doing what any other troops dare do, I was surprised at the vigor of their attack, and the tenacity with which they held their ground. * * *

A. R. WRIGHT, *Brigadier-General, etc.*

No one can believe that General Lee contemplated any such disjointed action, but must be convinced that he had given orders for such co-operation as would in all probability have produced better results, or having left it to the judgment of his lieutenants whether to attack or not, they misunderstood their orders or did not exercise that independent judgment in carrying them out which was expected of them. But to continue.

As I have stated previously, the enemy did not pursue Pickett. If they had, I would have at once called to arms and prepared to act as the emergency called for—either attack the advance against Pickett, or, if the whole line of the enemy advanced, would have retired to my position of the 2d, before the charge, and defended that line. The enemy did not pursue, because perhaps of the presence in their front of the tremendous artillery fire that would have been concentrated on their advance, and more probably because of the presence on their immediate flank of Longstreet's two divisions.

But a short while after Pickett's charge was over and while my men were at rest, as I have described, a staff officer of General Law, in command of Hood's division (General Hood having been wounded), came to me from General Law, asking that I send one of my brigades to take the place of one of his in line that had been detached to act against cavalry. I directed him to tell General Law that as Pickett had been utterly routed, he must close on the centre and cover his vacant space as he best could, as I could not spare a brigade. Just after the officer had gone, Colonel Sorrel, General Longstreet's Adjutant-General, rode up, and I proceeded to inform him of General Law's request and my instructions to him. He said: "Never mind that now, General; General Longstreet directs that you retire to your position of yesterday. Retire at once, and I will carry the order to General Law to retire Hood's division." I commenced to discuss the necessity of the order, as the advanced position I held was important, and had been won after a deadly struggle; that the order was given no doubt because of Pickett's repulse, but as there was no pursuit there was no necessity of it. Before concluding, Colonel Sorrel, interrupting, said:

"General, there is no discretion allowed, the order is for you to retire at once." I rode rapidly around, and directing some brigades to retire by head of regiments up ravines and others in line; and as they came from under the woods which concealed them from Round Top, the batteries up there opened on them, but by quickening the pace the aim was so disturbed that no damage was done. I halted the brigades as they came into position, and in a short while my line was re-established in the position of the day before. As we came in the enemy advanced clouds of skirmishers coming—I suppose their lines of battle behind—I strengthened my skirmishers and drove or kept them back of the peach orchard, so that I could rest undisturbed on my new line, and then went to my new position, and was sitting on my horse watching the enemy, when Major Johnston, of General Lee's staff, the same who had conducted my column the day before, rode up and remarked: "General, you have your division under very fine control!" I asked him what he meant. "Why," he said, "your orders are obeyed so promptly." "What is there strange about that?" I asked. "Have you not been repulsed and are retreating?" "No, sir," I replied. "I have not been engaged to-day. I am but taking up this position by order of General Longstreet." He apologized, saying that he thought I had been engaged and had been forced to retire, etc. Not long after this Colonel Sorrel came to me and asked if I could retake the position I had just abandoned. I demurred most decidedly to the suggestion under the circumstances, and asked why he made the inquiry. "Because," he said, "General Longstreet had forgotten that he had ordered it, and now disapproved the withdrawal." "But, Colonel Sorrel," I said, "recollect that you gave me the order." "Yes, sir," he said, "and General Longstreet gave it to me."

I was informed afterwards by General Benning, of Hood's division, that he never had been informed of my withdrawal, neither had General DuBose, and their commands had, in consequence, to run for it to get away, by reason of the sudden advance of the enemy on their flanks after I withdrew. They were under the orders of General Law.

As Pickett's repulse ended the battle of Gettysburg, the order for the withdrawal of Longstreet's advance was eminently proper, as otherwise it would have been left in a very precarious position, and it showed military foresight in Colonel Sorrell, even if he had used his own judgment in giving the order. My recollection is that this retreat was made about 2 o'clock P. M.

The enemy made no attempt to advance against my part of the line after it had been re-established, and the two armies remained quiet during the remainder of the day—that is, on the right and as far as I could see to my left.

General Bryan, who succeeded to the command of Semmes' brigade, has informed me that on the 3d of July himself and General Benning got an order to join in an assault on Round Top, but that both refused to obey. I knew nothing of the order, nor can I conceive who gave it.

My division was withdrawn from the battle-ground with the rest of the army, and retired via Monterey and Falling Waters across the Potomac into Virginia, without any hindrance from the enemy.

It may be remarked, in conclusion, that no one as yet has seemed disposed to give blame to General Lee—I mean no one who was under his command—but no matter what order he gave, or what resulted from it, if even disaster followed, it has been the disposition to believe that the cause was not in the order but in the execution of it by subordinates. This resulted in a great measure from that nobility of soul which caused General Lee to be willing to take the blame on himself and not to try and throw it on others.

He was one of those chosen few in the world, so richly endowed with that Divine quality which made men follow him, attach themselves to him, and do his bidding without question; that he never had to contend against the machinations of the ambitious, the envious or the mischievous. No matter whether in victory or defeat he had no defection from him, and to the last his commands were obeyed without a murmur. This great respect and confidence which all had in him prevented or disarmed even a desire to criticize his orders.

And no matter how we may at this day discuss the causes of our failure at Gettysburg, it remains the general opinion that if General Lee's orders had been obeyed all would have been well, and that they were not, resulted from causes beyond his control.

And it is due to General Lee to believe that in those instances where his orders seem now to have been defective, he would, if living, be able to supply such information concerning them as would make them plain.

In this connection I think the following extract from a report made by Colonel Allan, of General Ewell's staff, evidently an unprejudiced and capable gentleman, is worthy of serious consid-

eration. It comes from one who represents that great and gallant soldier who succeeded the immortal Stonewall, and whose corps was on the left of our army. Colonel Allan says:

"The Confederate line was a long one, and the perfect co-operation in the attack needed, to prevent General Meade, whose line was a short one, from using the same troops at more than one point, was difficult of attainment.

"Two of the corps commanders, Hill and Ewell, were new in their places.

Longstreet's attack on the Federal left on the 2d was delayed beyond the expected time, and was not promptly seconded by Hill and Ewell when made.

"Ewell's divisions were not made to act in concert—Johnson, Early, Rodes acting in succession.

"General Lee always expressed the strongest conviction that had the Confederate corps attacked General Meade simultaneously on either the 2d or 3d, he would have succeeded in overthrowing the Federal army; that he had used every effort to insure concert of action, but had failed. He said that he had consulted Ewell, and told him if he could not carry his part of the line, he would move his corps to the right of Longstreet, and threaten the Federal communications with Baltimore; but upon the statements of General Ewell and Johnson that the positions in their front could be carried, he did not change his plan. He urged concert of action on the 3d, but Johnson's division fought and suffered in the morning alone, and Pickett's attack in the afternoon was unsupported. There was nothing foolish in Pickett's attack had it been executed as designed. Pickett carried the works before him; had Pettigrew and Wilcox moved with him, and Hill and Ewell vigorously seconded this onset, General Lee never doubted that the Federal army would have been ruined."

But although that battle was against us, and although the war was against us, and we lost all save our honor, we have been taught a lesson which I hope we will profit by. We are taught that the pluck of the South, when well directed, though with very few resources to back it, has wrestled with great chances of success against the most powerful combinations in war that perhaps was ever made against any people; and now that the war is over, let us again concentrate those inborn energies, that pluck, to the accomplishment of success in all the arts of peace that go to make a people prosperous and happy, and the habits of endurance which our heavy adversity has taught us will be but stepping stones to our success over all rivals.

Pettigrew's Charge at Gettysburg.

By General B. D. FRY.

OFFICE OF SOUTHERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
RICHMOND, VA., December 8th, 1878.

General B. D. FRY:

My Dear Fry—Although the battle of Gettysburg has during the year past been very much discussed, no proper exposition has been made of the part which was borne in the final charge by the brigades that day commanded by General Pettigrew. Swinton and other writers have created the impression that Pickett's division alone reached, in order of attack, the position held by the enemy. You are the senior surviving brigadier who was with Pettigrew that day, and with you rests the opportunity to vindicate the good name of those troops and the fair fame of Pettigrew, who was one of the most cultivated, accomplished and chivalrous commanders of the Army of Northern Virginia.

I hope, therefore, you will contribute to the records of this Society your narrative of the final charge at Gettysburg.

Sincerely and always your friend,

DABNEY H. MAURY,

Chairman Executive Committee Southern Historical Society.

In the numerous accounts of the battle of Gettysburg heretofore published, the writers have generally referred to the last effort made by the Confederate troops as "Pickett's charge," and in almost every instance have conveyed the idea that no troops but Pickett's division took an active part in that fierce and tremendous struggle. Disclaiming any intention to detract in the least from the glory won on that day by the gallant Virginia division, or its heroic commander, who had then been for more than twenty years one of my most valued friends, I may be permitted to say that some injustice has been done to the division commanded by General Pettigrew.

As colonel of the Thirteenth Alabama infantry, I was attached to Archer's brigade of Heth's division. That brigade opened the battle on the morning of July 1st, and during the fighting which immediately ensued General Heth was wounded, and the com-

mand of the division devolved upon Brigadier-General Pettigrew. General Archer was captured, and I succeeded him in command of the brigade.

During the forenoon of the 3d, while our division was resting in line behind the ridge and skirt of woods which masked us from the enemy, Generals Lee, Longstreet and A. P. Hill rode up, and, dismounting, seated themselves on the trunk of a fallen tree some fifty or sixty paces from where I sat on my horse at the right of our division. After an apparently careful examination of a map, and a consultation of some length, they remounted and rode away. Staff officers and couriers began to move briskly about, and a few minutes after General Pettigrew rode up and informed me that after a heavy cannonade we would assault the position in our front, and added: "They will of course return the fire with all the guns they have; we must shelter the men as best we can, and make them lie down." At the same time he directed me to see General Pickett at once and have an understanding as to the *dress* in the advance. I rode to General Pickett, whose division was formed on the right of and in line with ours. He appeared to be in excellent spirits, and, after a cordial greeting and a pleasant reference to our having been together in work of that kind at Chapultepec, expressed great confidence in the ability of our troops to drive the enemy after they had been "demoralized by our artillery." General Garnett, who commanded his left brigade, having joined us, it was agreed that he would dress on my command. I immediately returned and informed General Pettigrew of this agreement. It was then understood that my command should be considered the centre, and that in the assault both divisions should align themselves by it. Soon after the two divisions moved forward about a hundred paces, and the men lay down behind our line of batteries. The cannonade which followed has been often and justly described as the most terrible of the war. In it my command suffered a considerable loss. Several officers were killed and wounded, with a number of the rank and file. I received a painful wound on the right shoulder from a fragment of shell. After lying inactive under that deadly storm of hissing and exploding missiles, it seemed a relief to go forward to the desperate assault. At a signal from Pettigrew I called my command to attention. The men sprang up with cheerful alacrity, and the long line advanced. "Stormed at with shot and shell," it moved steadily on, and even when grape, canister, and musket balls began to rain upon it the gaps were quickly

closed and the alignment preserved. Strong as was the position of the enemy, it seemed that such determination could not fail. I heard Garnett give a command to his men which, amid the rattle of musketry, I could not distinguish. Seeing my look or gesture of inquiry, he called out, "I am dressing on you!" A few seconds after he fell dead. A moment later—and after Captain Williams and Colonel George had been wounded by my side—a shot through the thigh prostrated me. I was so confident of victory that to some of my men who ran up to carry me off I shouted, "Go on; it will not last five minutes longer!" The men rushed forward into the smoke, which soon became so dense that I could see little of what was going on before me. But a moment later I heard General Pettigrew, behind me, calling to some of his staff to "rally them on the left." The roll of musketry was then incessant, and I believe that the Federal troops—probably blinded by the smoke—continued a rapid fire for some minutes after none but dead and wounded remained in their front. At length the firing ceased, and cheer after cheer from the enemy announced the failure of our attack. I was of course left a prisoner.

As evidence of how close was the fighting at that part of the line, I saw a Federal soldier with an ugly wound in his shoulder, which he told me he received from the spear on the end of one of my regimental colors; and I remembered having that morning observed and laughingly commented on the fact that the color-bearer of the Thirteenth Alabama had attached to his staff a formidable-looking lance head. All of the five regimental colors of my command reached the line of the enemy's works, and many of my men and officers were killed or wounded after passing over it. I believe the same was true of other brigades in General Pettigrew's command.

It is probable that Pickett's division, which up to that time had taken no part in the battle, was mainly relied upon for the final assault; but whatever may have been the first plan of attack, the division under Pettigrew went into it as part of the line of battle, and from the commencement of the advance to the closing death grapple, his right brigade was the directing one. General Pettigrew, who I know was that day in the thickest of the fire, was killed in a skirmish a few days later. No more earnest and gallant officer served in the Confederate army.

B. D. FRY.

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, December 14th, 1878.

A Correction of Dr. McKim's Paper.

By Colonel J. R. WINSTON.

It seems almost impossible to get the facts of battles. Writers of the very highest standing make different statements about the same transaction. Rev. Dr. McKim, in sketch of Steuart's brigade on third day at Gettysburg, says (*Southern Historical Society Papers*, June, 1878, pages 298-9): "Daniel's brigade remained in the breastworks during and after the charge, and neither from that command nor from any other had we any support." Now, I know that Daniel's brigade went into the fight on General Steuart's line; as we went in I passed General Steuart, and as I came out (badly wounded) I again passed him. He stopped me and talked with me about my wounds. A portion of Daniel's brigade—some of the Forty-fifth North Carolina regiment—never did get behind breastworks, although they were exposed to two lines of works of the enemy. I can bear fullest testimony to the gallantry of General Steuart and his brave regiments of Virginians, Marylanders and Carolinians on that ensanguined field. They were indeed heroes. I claim this for Daniel's brigade also, without the addition. Of course it is to be presumed that General Daniel acted in obedience to orders (*idem*).

Dr. McKim says Steuart lost, in killed, wounded and missing, 680 men. The consolidated reports of the Army of Northern Virginia make the losses as follows in these two brigades:

	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.
Steuart's,	51	250	301
Daniel's,	135	643	778

Daniel lost very few men on that campaign except killed and wounded.

MILTON, N. C.

An Alleged Proclamation of President Lincoln.

The following statement in reference to an alleged proclamation of Mr. Lincoln, said to have been prepared but never published, has been going the rounds of the press.

The letter from Judge Campbell, which we append, shows the inaccuracy of at least a part of the "unwritten history," and we doubt not that a thorough sifting would prove that the whole story is a *canard*. Who can give us additional facts?

(From Washington letter to New York Sun.)

In the dark and uncertain days preceding the outbreak of the rebellion there was much doubt in the mind of Mr. Lincoln regarding the disposition of the people North of the recognized dividing line between freedom and slavery to sustain aggressive measures for the preservation of the Union. State after State had seceded, and no demonstration had been made at the North to counteract the force of such movements at the South. On the contrary, there were public men who openly advocated a division of the Union into such parts as would suit geographical lines and their own interests and ambition. Notably, Mr. Hendricks favored a northwestern confederacy; some New Yorkers saw in the confusion of the times an opportunity to make their city the Venice of America; and some Californians thought a republic on the Pacific, with San Francisco for its commercial and political capital, would develop into mighty proportions before the end of the century. Horace Greeley had advocated in the *Tribune* peaceable separation and boldly proclaimed: "Let the erring sisters go in peace." The *Indianapolis Journal*, in the West, inspired by an ambition to "take a position," occupied the same ground. The Northern States sent peace commissioners to Washington to plead with the South for a peaceable solution of the difficulties and a maintenance of the Union. The Government, under Mr. Buchanan, did nothing to repress the military preparations making in the South, and when Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated there were nine States defying his authority and ready for war. His administration had a most formidable opposition in the two remaining States that seceded, and in those also that attempted to do so. His support at the North, in the event of war, he regarded as uncertain, and anarchy appeared inevitable.

In this condition of affairs commissioners appointed by Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, appeared on the scene, and through Judge Campbell, then late of the Supreme Court, who had resigned on the secession of Louisiana, commenced a negotiation for the surrender to that State of the Government forts and property within its limits. The commissioners were also aided by Dr. Todd,

of Kentucky, a brother of Mrs. Lincoln, who was in harmony with the views and actions of the South Carolinians. He was a temporary habitant at the White House, and acquired information in a private way that no one could have obtained in an official capacity, and which was made use of as time and circumstances required. The negotiations of South Carolina with the Government failed—not because of an indisposition to entertain the proposition submitted, but on account of the precipitate action of South Carolina troops in bombarding Fort Sumter. This made a peaceable dissolution of the Union a matter of impossibility and war an inevitable necessity.

While these negotiations were pending, however, a proclamation had been prepared recognizing the fact of the secession of certain States, and virtually acknowledging their independence, surrendering to them stated powers of the General Government over property and places within their limits, and guaranteeing them peaceable possession of the same on conditions specified. This proclamation had the sanction of Mr. Wade, of Ohio, and was in accordance with Mr. Greeley's frequently expressed views. With the appearance of the proclamation was to be an editorial in the Washington and New York papers sustaining the action of the administration. This was also prepared and held ready for use when the occasion demanded it. But the action at Fort Sumter changed all this, and a proclamation was issued instead for 75,000 men for three months to suppress rebellion; and war was thus accepted by an unwilling Government and people.

The proclamation calling for troops is a matter of history; that previously prepared looking to peace is not, and its existence must be proved from other sources than official records. The evidence on which it rests is the following statement: Mr. A. T. Cavis, a proof-reader at the Government printing office, is a gentleman of intelligence and culture, and of undoubted veracity. He is a native of Pennsylvania, but went to South Carolina in 1847, and remained until after the war. Previous to and during the war he was editor of the South Carolina *Guardian*, published at Columbia. His position gave him acquaintance and association with the State authorities, and he speaks from personal knowledge regarding the matters herein stated.

The proclamation looking to a peaceful separation of the States was obtained by Dr. Todd while at the White House, and by him given to Governor Pickens. It is not known how he came in possession of it, and it is not necessary to inquire into that now. But that he had the original draft of the proclamation, that it and the editorial designed to accompany its publication were written on official paper bearing the impress "Executive Mansion," is undoubtedly true. The proclamation and editorial were shown by Governor Pickens to Mr. Cavis, and by the latter published in his paper, the South Carolina *Guardian*. In the burning of Columbia by Sherman's troops the office and files of the *Guardian* were de-

stroyed, and there is no copy of the paper extant containing these documents. The original papers, however, are in the possession of Mrs. Pickens, at Edgefield, South Carolina, who has carefully preserved all the books and manuscripts collected by her late husband.

This is a most important and interesting fact connected with the unwritten history of the rebellion. It shows how difficult it was even for the most sagacious men to "read the signs of the times," and the events following proved that the people knew more than their rulers and assumed leaders.

Letter from Judge Campbell.

NEW ORLEANS, 11th December, 1878.

DR. J. WILLIAM JONES, *Secretary Southern Historical Society :*

My Dear Sir—Your letter of the 4th instant, inclosing a printed copy of a letter addressed to the *New York Sun* and published as containing "unwritten war history," and requesting some explanation on the subject, has been received.

The letter represents that after the inauguration of President Lincoln Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, appointed commissioners to visit Washington city, and who opened negotiations with the President, through me, for the surrender of the forts and property of the United States within that State; that there was a fair prospect of success and of a peaceable dissolution of the Union as the result of the negotiations, but the precipitate action of South Carolina troops in bombarding Fort Sumter made such a dissolution impossible and a war inevitable. The letter says I had previously resigned the office of judge of the Supreme Court of the United States because of the secession of Louisiana.

I have no information that will support any portion of this statement as matter of fact. I had no connection with commissioners appointed by Governor Pickens, and do not remember that he appointed any to visit President Lincoln. I conducted no negotiations with President Lincoln to effect a dissolution of the Union at that time, and have no reason to believe that he would have entertained such a proposition at any time. I remained a member of the Supreme Court of the United States until after the surrender of Fort Sumter. My only intercourse with the Executive Department of the United States having reference to the surrender of forts and property was that which Justice Nelson and myself had with Secretary Seward in March, 1861, and which continued on my part until the bombardment of Sumter. The facts in respect to this intercourse I have communicated to the Society, and were published in one of the earliest of its numbers. The determination of President Lincoln to abandon Fort Sumter voluntarily had been changed prior to the bombardment, and the bombardment

was superinduced by his attempt to supply it with provisions, thereby to overcome the necessity for yielding it.

The bombardment was ordered by the Confederate Government, at Montgomery, and was not the result of any precipitancy on the part of the South Carolina troops.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN A. CAMPBELL.

We may simply add to the above that the efforts that have been made by Northern writers—that shine out conspicuously in the school “histories” and garnish their “religious” literature—to prove that the South “fired the first gun” and forced the North into a *war of defence*, are all utter perversions of the facts. The truth is that the whole aim and policy of the South was peace, not war—to be let alone, not to attack the North—and that when at last Major Anderson violated the agreement to “preserve intact the military status” by moving from Moultrie into Sumter—and Mr. Seward violated his solemnly-plighted word to the Confederate commissioners by attempting to reinforce and provision Sumter, and thereby convert it into a fortress for the subjugation of Charleston—“the first gun” had been virtually fired by the United States Government, and the reduction of the fort was *as purely an act of self-defence and self-preservation* as is to be found in all history. Indeed, the annals of no people struggling for independence afford an example of a more complete *defensive* war than was ours, nor a more stainless record than we can show in the conduct of the great struggle. And we may proudly await the verdict of history in the full confidence that it will be that of England’s accomplished scholar (Professor P. S. Worsley), who said, in his beautiful stanzas dedicating to General R. E. Lee his translation of the *Iliad*:

“Ah, realm of tombs!—but let her bear
This blazon to the last of times:
No nation rose so white and fair,
Or fell so pure of crimes.”

Official Correspondence of Confederate State Department.

[We have a number of letters of interest connected with the Confederate mission to Canada, &c., which have never been published, and we present below our first installment of them. Northern writers have been very abusive of "Holcombe and his co-conspirators"; but no one who knew personally our "our silver-tongued orator," or competent to appreciate his chivalric character, could doubt for a moment that he was very high above any taint of dishonor. We would cheerfully submit to the world as settling this point his most confidential letters.]

Letter from Hon. J. P. Benjamin.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
RICHMOND, 24th February, 1864.

Hon. J. P. HOLCOMBE, *Special Commissioner, &c., Richmond:*

Sir—You will receive herewith the sum of eight thousand dollars, of which five hundred dollars are in gold coin and the remainder in a bill of exchange for 1,546£. 7s. 10d., equivalent to seven thousand five hundred dollars, counting the pound sterling at \$4.85. This amount is placed in your hands to enable you to accomplish the objects set forth in my letter of the 19th instant.

You will appropriate five thousand dollars of the amount now paid to you, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to defraying the expenses incurred in carrying out the instructions of the Department. The remaining three thousand dollars are paid in compensation of your personal services and to provide for your personal expenses.

If the time occupied in the mission confided to you shall exceed six months, counting from the date of your commission, a further compensation will be allowed you at the rate of five hundred dollars per month.

You will be expected to furnish vouchers to this Department for the disbursement of the five thousand dollars. As this sum is furnished by the President from the secret service fund, your accounts will not pass through the Treasury, but will be settled in this Department. For any sum you may pay out of these five thousand dollars under circumstances or for purposes that do not permit your taking receipts, you will furnish a certificate on honor, which will be received as sufficient voucher. Your traveling expenses will be at your own charge, except in cases where the Government may be able to furnish transportation. You will be pro-

vided with transportation to Halifax, but on your return you will provide for yourself unless fortunate enough to meet with a Government vessel coming home, in which case no charge for passage will be made against you.

In addition to the duties confided to you by the instructions of the 19th instant, I have now, at the instance of the President, to add another.

We are informed that several hundred of the officers and men enlisted in our service who were captured by the enemy, are now in Canada, having escaped from prison; that they are without means of returning home, although anxious to resume service. The Government fully recognizes the duty of aiding these unfortunate public servants to reach their posts of duty, and can only regret that it was not sooner informed of their condition. You are requested to make in Canada and Nova Scotia the requisite arrangements for having passage furnished them via Halifax to Bermuda, where they will receive from Major Walker, the agent of the Department of War, the necessary aid to secure their passage home. Colonel Kane, from whom we have just learned the facts, suggests that a proper agent be employed at Montreal, who shall give public notice that he is authorized to furnish passage to the Confederacy of all officers and men heretofore enlisted in its service who desire to return to their homes; that the applicants be sent down the Saint Lawrence and round to Halifax by water, as the cheapest conveyance, and from Halifax to Bermuda. In Halifax you will find the mercantile house of B. Weir, to which you can apply with confidence for any advice or assistance in making these arrangements.

The whole number of escaped prisoners is supposed not to exceed four hundred, and it is not probable that all will make application.

You will receive herewith a letter of credit on Liverpool for twenty-five thousand dollars, which we presume to be enough for the present, and which you will use as may be needed for this purpose; and you are requested to send as early news as convenient of the prospect of restoring our fellow-citizens to their country, the number likely to come, and whether a further sum of money is necessary for the purpose.

It would be advisable, before acting in this matter, to inform the British colonial authorities of your design, in order to obviate any misrepresentations of our enemies, who will assuredly endeavor to

create the false impression that we are recruiting for our armies in British territory. You will explain that you are instructed scrupulously to avoid any breach of public or municipal law, and that your sole purpose is, as above explained, to aid our own people to return to their homes.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. P. BENJAMIN, *Secretary of State.*

Letter from Hon. J. P. Holcombe.

WILMINGTON, February 29, 1864.

Hon. J. P. BENJAMIN, *Secretary of State, C. S. A. :*

My Dear Sir—The Caledonia will not get out before to-morrow night, and I avail myself of the delay to write you unofficially a few lines. On inquiry of Mr. Power, I learn that it will be easy to prove Locke's residence (and probably citizenship) for many years in South Carolina, and he gives the name of a witness, which I enclose. It may be well to have his testimony taken and forwarded to me at Halifax.

In a Nassau paper received by the Lucy, just in, I observe a paragraph to the effect that Judge Stewart, of the Admiralty Court, had finally disposed of the Chesapeake by ordering a restoration of the ship and cargo to the original owners on payment of the costs in court. I think it probable that the colonial authorities will disclaim all authority to entertain any application for indemnity and refer me to the home Government. In the event of its being deemed inadvisable to institute any proceedings, appellate or otherwise, in the Court of Admiralty, this will present a contingency not embraced in my present instructions. I will, of course, make the earliest practicable report of the facts after my arrival at Halifax.

I find the Caledonia will be crowded with passengers sailing by order of the Government. Parr has agreed to wait and take his chance in the next vessel that goes out.

I hope Captain Lalor may be able to get out, but there seems no principle upon which a right to precedence is ascertained beyond priority, and I am fearful of the result.

I have been so fortunate as to secure a copy of Saturday's *Sentinel*, but have not yet read the interesting article it contains.

With great esteem, I am, &c., &c.,

JAMES P. HOLCOMBE.

Letter from Hon. J. P. Holcombe.

SAINT GEORGE'S, March 12th, 1864.

HON. J. P. BENJAMIN, *Secretary of State, C. S. A.:*

Sir—I avail myself of the earliest opportunity to inform you of the circumstances which have delayed my departure from this port. The Caledonia crossed the bar at Wilmington about ten o'clock on Tuesday night, the first of March. With the exception of that night and the succeeding day, we had fine weather, but the speed of the vessel was so much less than had been anticipated that we did not reach this island until Sunday night. The Caledonia, in a rough sea, with no more cargo than a few days' coal, would not average more than four knots and a half an hour. I ascertained, after her arrival here, that the unloading of her cargo, taking on coal for Halifax, and some repairs, would detain her until about the 15th of March, and that the British mail steamer for Halifax would leave here on Friday, the 18th. I thought that as under the most favorable circumstances I could only save a day or two of time, and in all probability would lose it during the voyage by taking the Caledonia, it would be best to save the Government the heavy expense and hazard of my trip in that vessel, and to take my passage for next Friday in the Alpha.

Captain Lalor being very solicitous to arrive in England at the earliest day, and finding that he would save nearly a week's time by going to Saint Thomas and thence to Southampton, I furnished him with oral instructions, with the money to pay his passage.

A slip which I inclose indicates the position taken by Judge Stewart in the Chesapeake, and upon which I should be gratified to have your opinion.

I remain, with great respect,

JAMES P. HOLCOMBE.

Letter from Hon. J. P. Holcombe.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, April 1st, 1864.

HON. J. P. BENJAMIN, *Secretary of State, C. S. A.:*

Sir—In the communication which I had the honor to transmit from Bermuda, I explained the reasons which induced me to turn the Caledonia over to her owners, and to engage my passage to Halifax in the British mail steamer Alpha. From what has since

transpired, it is certain that if I had escaped capture upon the *Caledonia*, there would have been no saving of time at all commensurate with the heavy expense to the Government which the employment of that vessel would have involved. The *Alpha* did not reach this port until the 23d. of March, having been delayed for two days by a severe storm which it encountered soon after leaving the Gulf Stream. Upon my arrival I learned that the prisoners, whose delivery had been demanded by the United States under the extradition treaty, had been released by the judicial authorities of New Brunswick upon habeas corpus; and although new warrants are out for their arrest, it is not probable they can be executed. The most embarrassing phase which this case could assume would be presented for solution by the surrender of these men. Whatever may be the light in which the captors of the *Chesapeake* should be regarded according to the strict rules of law, the Government and people of the Confederate States cannot be indifferent to their fate. They imperilled life and liberty in an enterprise of great hazard, which they honestly believed was invested with the sanction of law, and to which, as a body, I have reason to think, they were mainly impelled by a generous sympathy with our cause. Whilst, therefore, in exercising the discretion confided to me, I have determined at least for the present to interpose no claim to the *Chesapeake* as prize of war on behalf of the Confederate States, I have endeavored to observe a diplomatic reticence as to the view which our Government may ultimately take of that transaction. I can imagine the existence of circumstances under which the Government, to save these brave and innocent men from a cruel and unrighteous doom, might claim the benefit of principles which it would not think it judicious to assert if the only interest at stake was one of property.

As to the *Chesapeake*, I find that she had been surrendered to her original owners without the almost invariable requisition of bail to answer prospective demands.

The reasons which induced the judge to depart from the established course of admiralty practice are contained in the opinion (of which I send you a copy). Taking the opinion and the conduct of the magistrate himself during the progress of the cause (of which I also transmit a history) together, I do not believe any judicial proceeding has taken place in a British court for a century and a half so discreditable to its dignity, its intelligence or its justice.

But notwithstanding my indignation at the offensive and unworthy bearing of Judge Stewart, I am not willing, after a full examination of the facts of this case, to commit the Government to interference with it in any form.

The moral weight which should attach to its interposition would be impaired by advancing a claim, which it is almost certain would be allowed neither by the British courts nor the British Government, and which we could sustain only by affirming principles doubtful in law and equivocal in morals. The facts upon which my opinion rests are these: Of the party actually engaged in the capture—fourteen or fifteen in number—only one has any claim to the character of a Confederate citizen or belonging in any way to service; this was the Second Officer, H. A. Parr, who, although born in Canada, had lived for the last seven years in Tennessee. The Lieutenant-Commanding, John C. Braine, I have ascertained beyond doubt, had been released from Fort Warren on the application of the British Minister, on the allegation of being a British subject. This, indeed, is the substance of his own admission; nor has he since been within the Confederacy.

Although he states that he had been in our military service at an earlier period, the declaration is probably untrue, and would not be received to contradict the deliberate and solemn allegation by which he obtained his liberty. He is, I think, estopped from claiming—what, in truth, I do not believe he ever possessed—the Confederate nationality. Passing over for the present the consideration of what effect Parker's connection with this enterprise may have upon its character, it appears to have been a capture made for the benefit of the Confederacy by a body of men, without any public authority, and who, with the single exception of a subordinate officer, were British subjects.

I do not think such a case can be brought within the application of the principle, perfectly well settled, and which in a war like the present our Government ought never to yield, that the citizen of a belligerent State, with or without a commission, may capture enemies' property at sea. That doctrine (as may be seen in the elaborate discussion of the opinions of British and foreign jurists by Judge Story, in the case of the *Ship Emulous*, 1 Gall. Rep., 563, 55; 8 Cranch, 110—a discussion which Mr. Phillimore pronounces perfectly exhaustive) is founded upon the hostile relations which the mere declaration of war creates between citizens of the contending States. A commission would appear to me indispen-

sable to enable a belligerent to claim for itself the benefit of captures made in its behalf by citizens of a neutral State. Parr's position may be, and in all probability is, very different from that of his associates; but it does not seem to me to have been sufficiently commanding to impress on the enterprise his own nationality. The question then recurs, whether the legal complection of this capture can be altered by Parker's connection with it, assuming that his Confederate character can be established by proof. In the absence of all facilities for investigation (the law library of the Province, to which I have access, being very meagre), I am not free from all doubt as to the correctness of my conclusions upon this point. The letters of marque, I am disposed to think, attach only to the vessel, and confer authority upon the master, whoever he may be, for the time being. They do not confer upon the commander a personal authority, which will survive the destruction of his ship (unless in reference to a prize which she may have captured) and enable him to act as a commissioned officer wherever he may be found. If I am correct in this, Parker can only be regarded as a private citizen of the Confederacy, with no right, such as he assumed, to enlist men or appoint officers in its service; and as he was not present when the Chesapeake was taken, the character of the capture must be determined by that of persons on board at the time.

If, however, I am mistaken in my view of the law upon this point (which I would be very glad to find), there is another principle which, whilst it would not affect the captors with any crime in the eye of public law, would no doubt be appealed to in order to deprive us of the fruits of the capture—I mean that enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of *L'Aneistad De Rues*, 5 Wheat, 385; the *Belle Corunes*, 6 Wheat, 152; *La Conception*, *ibid*, 235; *La Santissima Trinidad*, 7 Wheat, 283 and 9, to wit: that where a prize has been taken by any agency created in violation of neutral sovereignty, it will, if brought voluntarily within the neutral jurisdiction, be restored to the original owners. I do not know that the case of the Chesapeake can be brought within the range of any exception to this principle. The evidence contained in the report of the trial at Saint Johns (of which I send a copy) discloses a clear violation by Parker of the British foreign enlistment act; and upon this ground alone I apprehend that any claim we might advance to the Chesapeake would be defeated.

The conduct of the captors after the capture, in peddling the cargo in violation of the revenue laws of the Province, and the appropriation of a portion of the proceeds by some of them to their own use, and all the developments which have been made as to the motives and character of Braine, are calculated to throw so much suspicion and discredit around the whole transaction, that I should deem it unwise, even were the law supposed to be in our favor, without weightier reasons than now exist, to compromise the Confederacy by assuming its responsibility.

I cannot close this communication without bringing to the attention and notice of the Government the generous sympathy and liberal contribution in every matter in which the interests of the company were supposed to be involved, of some prominent gentlemen in this city, and especially of Dr. Almon, Mr. Keith, Mr. Weir and Mr. Ritchie. They have given money, time and influence without reserve, as if our cause had been that of their own country. I feel that I shall not transcend the spirit of my instructions in tendering Mr. Ritchie, of this city, and Mr. Gray, of Saint Johns, on behalf of the Confederacy, some compensation for professional services which were rendered most faithfully and laboriously and with no other object than to advance our cause. I feel that the gentlemen whose names I have given are entitled to some special acknowledgment from our Government of their handsome conduct, and I am certain it would be most highly appreciated by them, and would exercise a happy influence in this community.

It was so late before I could procure all the documents upon which to rest my action, that I am unable to embrace in this letter several matters I desire to bring to your attention.

With the highest consideration,

JAMES P. HOLCOMBE.

P. S.—It may not be improper to add that the conclusions which I have reached are in accordance with the judgment of our most discreet and intelligent friends in this place.

The Death of Major-General J. E. B. Stuart.

The circumstances attending the wounding and death of the "Flower of Cavaliers" (General J. E. B. Stuart) ought to be put in permanent form for the use of the future historian, for no history of the Army of Northern Virginia would be complete which did not give large space to the chivalric deeds of this great soldier.

Among our most precious memories of those stirring times are those which cluster around the person and character of Stuart. We remember him as he led an infantry charge on the outpost in the autumn of 1861—as he appeared at his headquarters on his red blanket on Munson's hill, with a kindly word and a cordial grasp for even the private soldier—as all through the campaigns which followed he appeared at the head of his column or in the heat of battle always gay, quick and daring—and especially do we love to recall him amid the sweets of social intercourse or sitting a deeply interested listener in the meetings of our Chaplains' Association at Orange Courthouse. We were present when he took leave of his devoted wife at the opening of the campaign of 1864, saw him several times amid those bloody scenes in the Wilderness, and wept with the whole army when the sad news came that the great cavalryman had fallen—that the "Chevalier Bayard" of the Confederacy had yielded up his noble life in defending our capital from imminent danger.

We would be glad to have from some competent hand a sketch of that last campaign of Stuart's, and a detailed account of the circumstances immediately connected with his fall. Meantime we give below the very interesting account of his last moments, which appeared at the time of his death in the *Richmond Examiner*:

No incident of mortality, since the fall of the great Jackson, has occasioned more painful regret than this. Major-General J. E. B. Stuart, the model of Virginian cavaliers and dashing chieftain, whose name was a terror to the enemy, and familiar as a household word in two continents, is dead—struck down by a bullet from the foe, and the whole Confederacy mourns him. He breathed out his gallant spirit resignedly, and in the full possession of all his remarkable faculties of mind and body, at twenty-two minutes to eight o'clock Thursday night, at the residence of Dr. Brewer, a relative, on Grace street, in the presence of Drs. Brewer, Garnett, Gibson, and Fontaine, of the General's staff, Rev. Messrs. Peterkin and Kepler, and a circle of sorrow-stricken comrades and friends.

We learn from the physicians in attendance upon the General, that his condition during the day was very changeable, with occasional delirium and other unmistakable symptoms of speedy dissolution. In the moments of delirium the General's mind wandered, and, like the immortal Jackson (whose spirit, we trust, his has joined), in the lapse of reason his faculties were busied with the details of his command. He reviewed, in broken sentences, all his glorious campaigns around McClellan's rear on the Peninsula, beyond the Potomac, and upon the Rapidan, quoting from his orders and issuing new ones to his couriers, with a last injunction to "make haste."

About noon, Thursday, President Davis visited his bedside, and spent some fifteen minutes in the dying chamber of his favorite chieftain. The President, taking his hand, said, "General, how do you feel?" He replied, "Easy, but willing to die, if God and my country think I have fulfilled my destiny and done my duty." As evening approached the General's delirium increased, and his mind again wandered to the battlefields over which he had fought, then off to wife and children, and off again to the front. A telegraphic message had been sent for his wife, who was in the country, with the injunction to make all haste, as the General was dangerously wounded. Some thoughtless but unauthorized person, thinking probably to spare his wife pain, altered the dispatch to "slightly wounded," and it was thus she received it, and did not make that haste which she otherwise would have done to reach his side.

As the evening wore on, the paroxysms of pain increased, and mortification set in rapidly. Though suffering the greatest agony at times, the General was calm, and applied to the wound with his own hand the ice intended to relieve the pain. During the evening he asked Dr. Brewer how long he thought he could live, and whether it was possible for him to survive through the night. The Doctor, knowing he did not desire to be buoyed by false hopes, told him frankly that death, that last enemy, was rapidly approaching. The General nodded and said, "I am resigned if it be God's will; but I would like to see my wife. But God's will be done." Several times he roused up and asked if she had come.

To the Doctor, who sat holding his wrist and counting the fleeting, weakening pulse, he remarked, "Doctor, I suppose I am going fast now. It will soon be over. But God's will be done. I hope I have fulfilled my destiny to my country and my duty to God."

At half-past seven o'clock it was evident to the physicians that death was setting its clammy seal upon the brave, open brow of the General, and told him so; asked if he had any last messages to give. The General, with a mind perfectly clear and possessed, then made dispositions of his staff and personal effects. To Mrs. General R. E. Lee he directed that his golden spurs be given as a dying memento of his love and esteem of her husband. To his staff officers he gave his horses. So particular was he in small things, even in the dying hour, that he emphatically exhibited and

illustrated the ruling passion strong in death. To one of his staff, who was a heavy-built man, he said, "You had better take the larger horse; he will carry you better." Other mementoes he disposed of in a similar manner. To his young son he left his glorious sword.

His worldly matters closed, the eternal interest of his soul engaged his mind. Turning to the Rev. Mr. Peterkin, of the Episcopal Church, and of which he was an exemplary member, he asked him to sing the hymn commencing—

"Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee,"

he joining in with all the voice his strength would permit. He then joined in prayer with the ministers. To the Doctor he again said, "I am going fast now; I am resigned; God's will done." Thus died General J. E. B. Stuart.

His wife reached the house of death and mourning about ten o'clock on Thursday night, one hour and a half after dissolution, and was of course plunged into the greatest grief by the announcement that death had intervened between the announcement of the wounding of the General and her arrival.

The funeral services, preliminary to the consignment to the grave of the remains of General Stuart, were conducted yesterday afternoon in Saint James' Episcopal Church, corner of Marshall and Fifth streets—Rev. Dr. Peterkin, rector. The *cortege* reached the church about five o'clock, without music or military escort, the Public Guard being absent on duty. The church was already crowded with citizens. The metallic case containing the corpse was borne into the church and up in the centre aisle to the altar, the organ pealing a solemn funeral dirge and anthem by the choir.

Among the pall-bearers we noticed Brigadier-General John H. Winder, General George W. Randolph, General Joseph R. Anderson, Brigadier-General Lawton and Commodore Forrest.

Among the congregation appeared President Davis, General Bragg, General Ransom, and other civic and military officials in Richmond. A portion of the funeral services according to the Episcopal church was read by Rev. Dr. Peterkin, assisted by other ministers, concluding with singing and prayer.

The body was then borne forth to the hearse in waiting, decorated with black plumes and drawn by four white horses. The organ pealed its slow, solemn music as the body was borne to the entrance, and whilst the *cortege* was forming—the congregation standing by with heads uncovered. Several carriages in the line were occupied by the members of the deceased General's staff and relatives. From the church the *cortege* moved to Hollywood Cemetery, where the remains were deposited in a vault, the concluding portion of the affecting service read by Rev. Dr. Minnigerode, of Saint Paul's Church, and all that was mortal of the dead hero was shut in from the gaze of men.

Doctor Brewer, the brother-in-law of General Stuart, has furnished us with some particulars obtained from the General's own lips of the manner in which he came by his wound. He had formed a line of skirmishers near the Yellow Tavern, when, seeing a brigade preparing to charge on his left, General Stuart, with his staff and a few men, dashed down the line to form troops to repel the charge. About this time the Yankees came thundering down upon the General and his small escort. Twelve shots were fired at the General at short range, the Yankees evidently recognizing his well-known person. The General wheeled upon them with the natural bravery which had always characterized him, and discharged six shots from his revolver at his assailants. The last of the twelve shots fired at him struck the General in the left side of the stomach. He did not fall, knowing he would be captured if he did, and nerving himself in his seat, wheeled his horse's head and rode for the protection of his lines. Before he reached them his wound overcame him, and he fell, or was helped from his saddle by one of his ever-faithful troopers, and carried to a place of security. Subsequently, he was brought to Richmond in an ambulance. The immediate cause of death was mortification of the stomach, induced by the flow of blood from the kidneys and intestines into the cavity of the stomach.

General Stuart was about thirty-five years of age. He leaves a widow and two children. His oldest offspring, a sprightly boy, died a year ago while he was battling for his country on the Rappahannock. When telegraphed that his child was dying, he sent the reply, "I must leave my child in the hands of God; my country needs me here; I cannot come."

Thus has passed away, amid the exciting scenes of this revolution, one of the bravest and most dashing cavaliers that the "Old Dominion" has ever given birth to. Long will her sons recount the story of his achievements and mourn his untimely departure.

Editorial Paragraphs.

WE ADD SIXTEEN PAGES TO THIS NUMBER, and should be very glad to make it a permanent addition; but *that* depends on the status of our subscription list, and we beg our friends to send us promptly names and money.

RENEWALS have been coming in with some degree of briskness, but many of our friends have neglected this important matter. Ask your neighbor if he has renewed, and send us some *new* names.

REPORTS OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1864-5 are especially desired. The Archive Bureau at Washington lacks many of the most important of these reports, and our files also are very defective for these years. There were none of the battle reports later than May, 1863, published by the Confederate Congress; many of the reports for 1864-5 had never been sent to the War Department, and hence the great deficiency. But we are satisfied that many of these reports are still scattered through the country in the hands of the officers who prepared them or of others, and we beg our friends to make diligent inquiries and to endeavor to secure them for us. Remember that where parties are unwilling to surrender *originals*, we will receive them *as a loan* until copies can be made both for our office and the Archive Bureau in Washington.

A CHROMO OF THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT DAVIS at Montgomery, well executed from a photograph taken at the time, has been presented us by the general agent, Mr. Joseph Hurd, Prattsville, Ala., from whom it can be obtained.

It is said to be from the only photograph of that important event extant, and many will be glad to preserve in their homes this historical picture.

Book Notices.

Life of Commodore Josiah Tattnall. By Colonel Charles C. Jones, Jr. Savannah: Morning News Printing House.

We are indebted to the accomplished author for a copy of this very interesting biography of one whose gallant service for fifty years was an honor to the flag he bore, and whose death, after a well-spent life of nearly four score years, was so widely lamented.

The book gives a detailed and very interesting account of his ancestry, birth, school days in England, and his long and distinguished service in the United States navy until the secession of Georgia carried his allegiance with

his State, and caused him to resign his commission and enter the Confederate service.

His gallant service in command of the naval defences of South Carolina and Georgia is detailed, and then follows an account of his command of the iron-clad *Virginia* (*Merrimac*) after the wounding of Captain Buchanan. In this exceedingly interesting part of the narrative, official letters and reports of great historic value are given, and it is conclusively shown that the boasted "victory" of the *Monitor* over the *Virginia* is all a romance; but that, on the contrary, after the first encounter the *Monitor* avoided coming to close quarters with her more powerful antagonist, and declined the gage of battle thrown down to her.

The circumstances under which Commodore Tattnall afterwards destroyed the *Virginia*, to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy, are detailed, and he is fully exonerated from all blame in the premises. His subsequent career in the Confederate service, his life after the war, and his death, are all vividly portrayed—the whole making a book of rare interest and great historic value.

Colonel Jones has done his work admirably, and the general *get up* of the book reflects great credit on both printers and binders.

Memoirs of the War of the Southern Department. By Henry Lee. A new Edition with Revisions and a Biography of the Author. By R. E. Lee. New York: University Publishing Company.

We are indebted to the publishers for this admirably gotten up edition of a standard work, which should be in every library. "Light Horse Harry" wielded a graceful pen, and his story of the campaign in the "Southern Department" is one of deep interest. But the volume now possesses a greatly enhanced value by the addition of the brief biography of his father by General R. E. Lee. This is prepared with a skillful arrangement of material, a delicacy of feeling, and a real power of narration which at the same time charms the reader and deepens the general regret that the distinguished author was not spared to complete his own memoirs of the second war for independence, which the whole world would have read with intensest interest, and received as *settling* all statement of facts which it might have given.

ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA MEMORIAL VOLUME

At the last meeting of the Virginia Division Army Northern Virginia Association, I was requested, by a unanimous vote of the large number of old comrades present, to complete a volume which shall contain—

1. A carefully prepared Roster of Army of Northern Virginia.
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3. Reports of the annual reunions of the Virginia Division, Army of Northern Virginia, together with the addresses of Colonel C. S. Venable in 1873; Colonel Charles Marshall in 1874; Major John W. Daniel in 1875; Captain W. Gordon McCabe in 1876; Leigh Robinson, Esq., in 1877, and Colonel William Allan in 1878.

I have the material all arranged, and am prepared to issue the volume at once, just so soon as I obtain subscribers enough to insure the bare cost of publication.

Those who heard these addresses or have seen them in print will be glad to have them collected in a neat volume; and comrades of our grand old army who have been denied the privilege of mingling with us in our reunions will rejoice to have in permanent form the eulogies pronounced by our gifted President and his accomplished subalterns on the life and character of our grand old chieftain; the thrilling story of the campaign from the Rapidan to Petersburg, as graphically told by Colonel Venable, of Lee's staff; the strategic influence of Richmond on the campaigns of the Army Northern Virginia, as ably discussed by Colonel Charles Marshall, Lee's Military Secretary; the able and eloquent discussion of Gettysburg, by Major John W. Daniel, of General Early's staff; the story of the siege of Petersburg, as told in the scholarly, eloquent and valuable address of Captain W. Gordon McCabe; the vivid pictures of "the South before and at the battle of the Wilderness," by Private Leigh Robinson; and the able, exhaustive and valuable historic paper on "Jackson's Valley campaign," by Colonel William Allan, Chief of Ordnance of the Second corps.

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* * Your Magazine improves constantly. I am indebted to it every month for pleasure and instruction.

From Mr. JOHN WARD DEAN, of the New England Historic Genealogic Society, Boston, Mass.:

I have been a constant reader of the *Magazine of American History*, which for nearly two years has been published by you, and have a very high opinion of the work. The magazine contains papers on topics of interest in the history of our country, which are well written and embody the results of much patient research. Mr. Stephens, the editor, has shown good taste and judgment in the management of the work; and you, as its publishers, deserve much credit for its fine typographic appearance. I hope the liberal patronage, which I am told it has received, will be continued and increased.

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